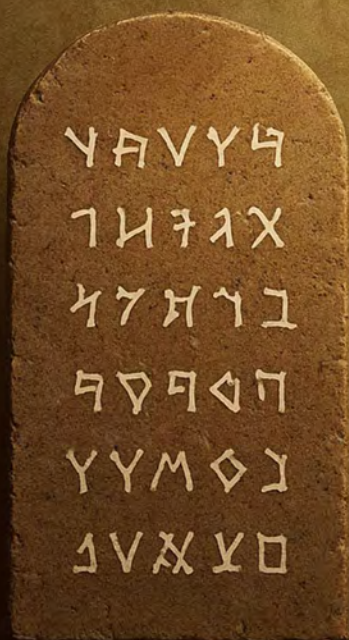


CHRIST THE REST NOT MOSES



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CHRIST THE REST, NOT MOSES

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PREFACE

The subject addressed in these pages is not a casual one. It strikes at the very heart of Christian doctrine and experience — the nature of true rest, the meaning of faith, and the foundation of our justification before a holy God.

As the writer of this work, I do not speak from theory alone, but from a life deeply marked by transformation, conflict, and conviction. My earlier book, *Converted on LSD Trip*, told the story of my dramatic conversion to Christ — a radical turning from darkness to light, from bondage to liberty. That journey brought with it a hunger for truth, a reverence for Scripture, and a lifelong pursuit of sound doctrine.

This present work is written for fellow believers — particularly those who are familiar with the doctrines of grace as taught in Calvinistic theology, and who have themselves known the regenerating grace of God by the new birth. It is for those who understand something of the narrow way, yet have found themselves isolated, misunderstood, or even excluded by others who cannot see the glorious simplicity of justification by faith alone.

Over twenty years ago, I was told in no uncertain terms by a Gospel Standard minister that my understanding of Hebrews 4 rendered me ineligible for fellowship in any of their churches. That moment has never left me. It revealed not only the intensity of doctrinal division but the need for clarity, humility, and unwavering commitment to the truth of the gospel.

I write, then, as a teacher, a fellow Christian, and a witness — serious in tone, unapologetic in conviction, and pastoral in heart. My desire is not to stir up controversy for its own sake, but to urge every reader to labour — not for legal rest, but to enter the true rest that remains for the people of God. A rest not found in shadows or external forms, but in Christ Himself, in whom all the promises of God are fulfilled.

Let the reader consider these things carefully. For this is not merely a theological matter — it is a matter of peace, of liberty, and of standing firm in the grace wherein we are called.

David Clarke

Author of : *Converted on LSD Trip*

Let Christian Men Be Men

Eldership Is Male

INTRODUCTION

This publication entitled *Christ The Rest Not Moses* relates to the Sabbath has been written to aid fellow Christians who have been unsettled by those who insist upon binding believers to the observance of the Sabbath day, as prescribed under the Mosaic covenant.

Since the time of the Reformation, much debate has arisen concerning the Sabbath, the Lord's Day, and whether the Ten Commandments serve as a binding rule of conduct for all men and at all time. This work seeks to demonstrate that the believer's rule of life is not found in the Law of Moses, but rather in the Gospel of Christ.

This position is neither novel nor peculiar but has been upheld by many faithful ministers of the Gospel throughout history, including Calvin, Tyn-dale, Bunyan, Gill, and Huntington and many others. While they may have varied in their expressions, I contend that the designation of the first day of the week as the 'Christian Sabbath' is erroneous in the sense that the first day of the week is not the Sabbath.

Also, having this misunderstanding can lead to a failure to understand the true nature of the rest a believer has in Christ. I invite the reader to carefully consider the arguments set forth in these pages and arrive at their own conclusion after due reflection.

REASON FOR THIS PUBLICATION

Upon returning from a mission trip to the Philippines in 2003, I sought fellowship with like-minded believers in the UK. However, I was again confronted by the same doctrinal errors and unscriptural practices that I had encountered thirty years prior at the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist Church, where I had been a member in 1984.

Desiring to worship with other Strict and Particular Baptists in England, I faced a significant hurdle. A prominent Strict Baptist minister informed me that I would not be accepted into membership in any Gospel Standard church due to my understanding of Hebrews 4 and the Sabbath.

"In this work, I present the harmful nature of such misunderstanding, supported by the writings of Christian men who share my views."

Contents

PREFACE	3
INTRODUCTION	4
CHAPTER 1	8
A Cause For Concern	8
CHAPTER 2	10
A Real Problem	10
CHAPTER 3	10
My letter expressing my views	10
CHAPTER 4	12
A Letter Of Rejection	12
CHAPTER 5	14
What Can We Conclude	14
CHAPTER 6	16
Summary Christ, Our True Sabbath Rest	16
CHAPTER 7	17
What Does Scripture Say	17
CHAPTER 8	21
The Sabbath and the Ten Commandments	21
CHAPTER 9	27
Why Gospel Standard Baptists are Accused of Antinomianism	27
CHAPTER 10	29
J.C. Philpott, former Editor of The Gospel Standard magazine	29
CHAPTER 11	31
Law, Gospel, and the Charge of Antinomianism	31
APPENDICES	34
1 MARTIN LUTHER THE SABBATH	34

(1483–1546)	34
2 JOHN CALVIN THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT	36
(1509 1564)	36
3 THEADO BEZA REFORMED THEOLOGY	42
(1519–1605)	42
4 WILLIAM TINDALE THE SABBATH	44
(1563)	44
5 JOHN FIRTH ON THE ABROGATION OF THE SABBATH	44
(1533)	44
6 JAN HUS THE SABBATH	46
(1369-1415)	46
7 JOHN WYCLIFFE THE SABBATH	48
(1320–1384)	48
8 DR. JOHN GILL D.D. PLACE AND TIME OF WORSHIP	50
(1697-1771)	50
9 GILBERT BEEBE THE SABBATH	52
(January 1, 1855)	53
10 WILLIAM HUNTINGTON OLD TESTAMENT SABBATH	57
(1745–1813)	57
11 J.C. PHILPOT LAW, GOSPEL STANDARD EDITOR	59
(1802-1868)	59
12 PHILIP MAURO OUR RELATIONSHIP TO MOSAIC LAW	62
(1920 America)	62
13 F.L. GOSDEN THE LAW AND GOSPEL	67
(A Gospel Standard Minister)	67
14 BARNABUS THE TRUE SABBATH REST	68
1st Century	68
15 JUSTIN MARTYR SABBATH AND MOSAIC LAW	73
(150 AD)	73
FURTHER PUBLICATIONS	76
LET CHRISTIAN MEN BE MEN	76

CONVERTED ON LSD TRIP	77
DIFFICULTIES ASSOCIATED WITH ARTICLES OF RELIGION	79
ELDERSHIP IS MALE	82

CHAPTER 1

A Cause For Concern

This conflict with the Strict Baptist minister was not a new issue for me. I had faced opposition over this very matter during my time at Bierton in 1984. It was among the reasons I withdrew my membership—a matter I documented in *The Bierton Crisis*, now republished as *Let Christian Men Be Men*. **(See our Further Publications list at the end of this book.)**

It became clear that such doctrinal misunderstandings were not confined to Bierton alone but were present across many Strict and Particular Baptist congregations in England.

During a discussion on the Sabbath and the Lord's Day with a Gospel Standard minister, I was met with unexpected hostility. Visibly agitated, he told me that my views made me unfit for fellowship in any Gospel Standard church. The cause of the dispute was my interpretation of Hebrews 4:11, which says:

“Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”

I had explained that this passage was not referring to the seventh-day Sabbath, as observed under the Mosaic Law, but rather to the spiritual rest believers have in Christ — a rest from striving to establish our own righteousness. I understood it to mean resting in the finished work of Jesus, not merely the observance of a day.

He, however, insisted that the verse referred specifically to the Sabbath day and that my refusal to see it that way was a denial of scriptural truth. For him, the Sabbath was not just a ceremonial shadow, but a requirement still binding that the day was changed by the Apostles to the first day of the week, — and my disagreement, in his view, disqualified me from fellowship.

This encounter highlighted the stark contrast between covenantal rest in Christ and legalistic observance, and sadly, how doctrinal rigidity can divide even sincere believers.

That's a deeply painful and significant experience — especially when it touches your identity in Christ and your place in His Church. Here's a way to thoughtfully and honestly express that lasting impact, while holding to

the truth of your convictions:

This exchange left a mark on me that I carry to this day and I am now 76 years old. For over twenty years, I've lived with the weight of knowing that, based on that minister's stance, I would never be accepted into membership of any Gospel Standard church. It wasn't simply a theological disagreement; it was a personal rejection — not just of an interpretation, but of fellowship.

This response was a far cry from the Apostle Paul who said Romans 14:6 (KJV):

“He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.”

This passage, written by the Apostle Paul, addresses differences in how Christians observe certain practices, like keeping specific days holy or dietary choices. Paul emphasizes that one person might do something (e.g., observe a day or eat certain foods) with the intention of honouring the Lord, while another might abstain from the same action, also with the intention of honouring the Lord. The key is that both are acting according to their conscience and faith, directed toward God.

In my case I was not allowed to act or believe according to my conscience. So what was I to do.

I wasn't contending for novelty as will be seen by the testimonies of our reformer in the APPENDIX of this book, nor seeking to undermine God's Word. I believed then, and I still believe, that the rest spoken of in Hebrews 4 is the **rest found in Christ** — not in the ceremonial observance of the seventh-day Sabbath. The text calls believers to cease from their own works and to rest by faith in the finished work of Jesus. I saw, and still see, the Sabbath as **a shadow, fulfilled in Him**, not a binding ordinance upon the New Testament Church.

Yet the door to fellowship was effectively closed — and I knew of no way to reopen it. No process of discussion. No room for gracious difference. Just a hard line drawn. And that line has shaped my journey in ways both painful and formative.

Even now, I find it difficult. The Gospel Standard people were, in many respects, my brethren. I admired their seriousness, their reverence, their commitment to the doctrines of grace. But on this point, it seemed there could be no dialogue. Only division.

CHAPTER 2

A Real Problem

At the time, I was the sole surviving member of the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist Church—a recognized Gospel Standard cause. All other members had passed away while I was on mission work in the Philippines. According to our church rules, only the church itself could terminate a member's fellowship, and they had never done so. In fact, they had expressed their desire for my return.

While I was away, the Bierton Chapel was entrusted to new trustees from The Association of Grace Baptist Churches LTD, who did not adhere to the Gospel Standard Articles of Religion. Eventually, the chapel was sold which was against my expressed wishes,

Thus, I found myself both isolated and rejected—not only was my original congregation gone, but I was denied fellowship elsewhere based on my scriptural convictions regarding the Sabbath. Out of deep concern, I wrote to the minister who opposed my views, hoping for theological discussion and clarity. His reply, however, was far from gracious and lacked any biblical correction.

CHAPTER 3

My letter expressing my views

Date: 18th November 2003 From: David Clarke To: Unnamed Minister

Dear Unnamed Minister (by request),

I too despise needless controversy. Let us not be contentious, but faithful. The truth is light in darkness, and I must not remain silent when Scripture speaks plainly. The distinction between Law and Gospel is a real and vital one, revealed clearly in the Word of God.

Arguments based on long-standing tradition or theological familiarity carry

no weight if they contradict plain Scripture. A child who clings to the plain reading of the Word is wiser than worldly theologians who stray from it.

“This only would I learn of you: Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?” (Galatians 3:2).

The contrast is clear: the Spirit is received not through the Law (given by Moses 430 years after Abraham) but by faith. This Law refers to the Ten Commandments given at Sinai.

Satan ridicules those who uphold the truth, dismissing their understanding as imagination. But Scripture says, *“The Law came by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ”* (John 1:17). This Law did not come by Adam, Noah, or Abraham. Any assertion to the contrary contradicts the Word of God.

Those who insist otherwise are the ones causing division, not those who cling to the plain reading of Scripture.

The allegory of Ishmael and Isaac (Galatians 4) shows that the natural man—bound to the Law—persecutes the free-born son of promise. This conflict continues to this day. It is the natural man who insists that the Law is a rule of life for believers. But the spiritual man it is the gospel of Christ.

I ask you not to persecute me for declaring this truth. Many books and sermons argue otherwise, but no weight of tradition can overrule the inspired Word: *“The Law came by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ.”*

This Law, given exclusively to Israel, excluded Gentiles from the covenants of promise. We must acknowledge this truth or any further discussion will be in vain.

I remain open to biblical correction but will not contend in bitterness. My conscience is tender, and I desire not to offend. But I cannot accept views that twist Scripture to uphold human systems of doctrine.

Your view on the Sabbath is problematic. The seventh day is Saturday, not Sunday. This cannot be changed. Twisting Scripture to align with tradition is dangerous.

I hope to discuss this further in the spirit of humility. Please do not attribute

my convictions to imagination. If my words have offended, I ask your forgiveness.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ

David Clarke 18th November 2003

CHAPTER 4

A Letter Of Rejection

2nd December 2003

Dear David,

It is not my custom to answer letters of this nature. However, I have been persuaded by many friends to make this brief reply. I am thankful to be the recipient of your letter and not the writer.

David, the views that you hold on the Law and the Lord's Day are wholly wrong and derogatory to the person and work of Christ. I can assure you that neither the church at Bournemouth, nor the church at Hedge End (of which I am a trustee), nor Portsmouth or, Swanick Shore hold your errors, and would never receive into church membership those that hold such notions.

Furthermore, there is not one church on the Gospel Standard list that holds your views, or would receive into church membership any that believed such none scriptural notions.

I have learned the hard way, David, never to enter into endless questions of this nature and soul destroying controversy that brings nothing but pain to the brethren and disturbs the peace of the churches, "But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ" (1 Corinthians 8:12). "But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and striving about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain (Titus 3:9).

May God grant you light from his Word to turn from your errors? Please respect my wish not to publish my letter in any of your books.

Yours sincerely

Un-named Minister.

Points of Difference

This response was in fact a reply to my letter of 18 th November 2003. In which I wrote to clarify my position and help this minister, who appeared confused (In my opinion) over the Sabbath. His response confirmed the need to defend gospel truth and practice against serious error.

My Response to the Letter of Rejection

For over twenty years, I have remained silent outside church membership, informed that no Gospel Standard church or minister would accept my views.

This minister's rejection was ungracious, unbiblical, and deeply hurtful. His response lacked scriptural support and resembled the behaviour of a deaf adder (Psalm 58:5), unwilling to hear biblical truth.

He metaphorically struck me a blow behind closed doors and sought to bind me to silence. But I am set for the defence and confirmation of the gospel and will not remain silent.

This experience confirms the need to teach the next generation the glorious gospel of Christ. This is the reason for the founding of the Bierton Particular Baptist Institute, an internet archive.

Observations on This Minister's Views

The minister adopts the position of a 'weaker brother,' arguing from personal conscience. But in doing so, he imposes legalistic views on others, which is a deceptive strategy of Satan.

"Let no man judge you... in respect of a holyday... or of the sabbath days" (Colossians 2:16).

The true believer, born from above, is justified by faith alone in Christ alone. Those who insist on returning to the Law are imposing bondage.

This minister, like Peter when he fell into dissimulation, is to be blamed. Paul withstood Peter to his face, and so must we address error today (Gala-

tians 2:11).

Set for a Defence and Confirmation of the Gospel

It is time to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3). I maintain that Scripture teaches the new birth results in a new creation. The believer is justified by Christ's righteousness alone and has peace with God.

Christ Himself is our Sabbath rest (Hebrews 4:9-10). To look to the Law for righteousness is to fall from grace. (That is the doctrine of grace)

CHAPTER 5

What Can We Conclude

The scripture teaches the Law of Moses was given to the nation of Israel, at Mount Sinai, after their exodus from Egypt. This was the old covenant and it was the rule of righteousness (Deut. 6:25 And if we are careful to observe every one of these commandments before the LORD our God, as He has commanded us, then that will be our righteousness.") . This rule was and binding upon all the natural seed of Israel who were required to be circumcised and keep the law. This was the Old Covenant and a covenant of works, with blessing and curses promised to all those under it. This rule is done away for **all believers, in Christ**.

We point out that we believe the Lord Jesus Christ came, in the fullness of time, to redeem those who were under the law. Galatians 3:14-29. That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. That the atoning death of Christ was for all his chosen people, throughout all time, who consisted of both Jew and Gentile, styled in scripture as the elect, the whole world, the whole Israel of God, and called the church, the People of God.

It is maintained that the Lord Jesus fulfilled the Law, with all its demands bringing it to a fulfilling end for all his elect when he died, rose again and finally, at His coming, in judgment, which took place at the destruction of Jerusalem, in 70 AD. At which time the city of Jerusalem was destroyed along with the Temple and apostate Jewish people who were sent into slavery fulfilling the prophecy given my Moses in Deuteronomy 32.

As it is written:

“They made me jealous with what is not God... so I will make them jealous with those who are not a people; I will anger them with a foolish nation.”

Paul quotes this in Romans 10:19, applying it to the Gentiles. Because Israel rejected God, salvation was extended to the Gentiles—marking the beginning of the New Covenant.

Judgment and Destruction

Verses 22–25 describe coming judgment:

“A fire is kindled in my anger... The sword outside and terror inside will destroy both young man and virgin...”

This sounds very similar to Jesus’ warnings about the destruction of Jerusalem:

“Your house is left to you desolate.” (Matt. 23:38)

“Not one stone will be left upon another.” (Matt. 24:2)

Jesus showed that this judgment would happen soon—in His own generation.

Finally

I maintain that Scripture teaches the new man of grace is a new creation. He has a new nature, whose inclinations are those of a righteous man. Yet, he still possesses his old nature, which continually seeks to dominate the new.

Those who experience the new birth are those chosen by the Father in Christ before the foundation of the world. They have been regenerated and are made free to respond to the Gospel by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Their right standing before God is based on God’s act of justification, whereby the righteousness of the God-man, Jesus Christ, is imputed to them. In that righteousness, they are declared just.

They are given the grace of faith to believe all the truth of God. By faith, they have peace with God as they look to and depend upon the finished work of Christ in His death, by which He made full atonement for their sins.

The sentence of justification is impressed upon the conscience of the believer as they rest in Christ and look to Him for all their salvation. The Lord

Jesus is their true Sabbath rest.

“Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.”

– 2 Corinthians 5:17–18

“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

– 2 Corinthians 5:20–21

Summary

The events recorded in this book were not random or incidental—they point to critical issues in both doctrine and practice that demand attention in our day. It is entirely possible for someone to sit under gospel preaching for many years and yet remain untouched by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit.

In connection with my earlier reference to the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptists, I felt it necessary to document these challenges and explain my understanding of the issue of succession, as also explored in my book *Let Christian Men Be Men*, which I believe may serve to help those seeking to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 6

Summary Christ, Our True Sabbath Rest

In the light of Scripture and the insights of two of the Reformation’s greatest theologians—Martin Luther and John Calvin—it becomes unmistakably clear that the Sabbath, as a binding legal requirement, has been fulfilled and transformed through Christ.

Martin Luther was emphatic: Christians are no longer under the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament, including the Sabbath as observed by the Jews. He urged believers to resist any attempt to reintroduce the Sabbath as a legal

burden. For Luther, Sunday was not a divinely commanded holy day, but a practical provision—a time set aside for preaching, hearing the Word, and worship. What mattered was not the day itself but the devotion of the heart toward God. Christian liberty, not legal obligation, was the guiding principle.

John Calvin took this further by uncovering the deeper, spiritual significance of the Sabbath. He recognized the day as a shadow, a type pointing to the reality found in Christ. The Sabbath, in its truest sense, signifies resting from our own works and living in the sanctifying work of God. Calvin affirmed that while the legalistic observance of one day in seven was abolished in Christ, the moral and spiritual purposes of the Sabbath commandment remain: setting time aside for public worship, private devotion, and showing mercy through rest for others.

Both Reformers unite in declaring that Christ is our Sabbath. In Him, believers find the rest their souls truly need—not in a calendar day, but in ceasing from striving, in dying to self, and in living by grace. While the Churches wisely sets aside Sunday as a day of worship and reflection, this is done for order and edification, not under the yoke of law. The danger, they warn, lies not in gathering for worship, but in turning such gatherings into superstitious observances devoid of the gospel's freedom.

Therefore, let the Church rejoice in her liberty, gathering joyfully to hear the Word, breaking bread in fellowship, and resting not merely from labor but from self-righteousness. Let every day be lived in the spiritual rest of Christ, and may our worship be not in outward form only, but in spirit and in truth. In the end, the true Sabbath is not Saturday or Sunday—it is the person of Jesus Christ, in whom we find our everlasting rest.

CHAPTER 7

What Does Scripture Say

The New Testament scriptures plainly show that the seventh-day Sabbath was a practice among the Jews, and still is to this day and, according to the covenant given at Sinai, any breach of it was punishable by death.

The New Testament scriptures show that the first day of the week – the day after the Sabbath – our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead. From that time believing Jews began to gather on the first day, a day clearly distinct from the

Jewish Sabbath.

The purpose of this essay is to set forth the argument that the first day of the week, being Sunday, has never replaced the Jewish Sabbath; and that so long as the old covenant stands, the penalty for breaking the Sabbath still remains death by stoning.

I wish to draw attention to the fact that the Sabbath day, as a day of rest, was given to the Jews alone, and that it was based upon the order of creation, at the close of the creation week.

I also wish to emphasise that the command to keep the Sabbath day was never given to Adam or to his immediate descendants. Rather, it was reserved for, and given to, the Jewish people while they were in the wilderness.

The reason I bring this matter forward is because it is vital to be biblically sound when teaching others, and when considering membership in Christian churches. Serious divisions have arisen over the question of the Sabbath and the day of Christian worship, and some groups restrict their fellowship to those of the same mind belief.

Historically, confessions of faith have been produced to define belief and practice. The First London Baptist Confession (1644/46) makes no mention of the time, date, or nature of Christian worship. In contrast, the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646) asserts that the Christian day of worship is the first day of the week. This claim rests upon the assumption that the Sabbath was instituted on the seventh day of creation, binding upon Adam and all his descendants, and then changed to the first day of the week by the resurrection of Christ, confirmed by apostolic practice.

The difficulty this brings to Christians who value truth is that false assumptions regarding belief hinder unity in the faith until there is agreement according to the word of God. For example, it is assumed by some that God gave the seventh day to Adam as a commandment, binding upon all his seed. Yet there is no record of Adam, Seth, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob ever keeping the Sabbath. Rather, the scripture records that the Sabbath was given to Israel alone, as a covenant sign, and not to the whole world.

It is equally mistaken to say that the Sabbath was changed or transferred to the first day of the week at the resurrection of Jesus. No such command or

instruction was given by the apostles in the New Testament. We are simply told that believers began to meet on the first day of the week, and it is called “the Lord’s Day” but once, if at all, in the book of Revelation.

It is my conviction – and not mine alone, as I shall show – that the seventh-day Jewish Sabbath is not the same as the first day of the week. Christians meet on the first day not because the Sabbath was transferred, but because it was the day of the resurrection. Believers are therefore not bound by the old covenant sign, but are free to assemble at convenient times, not under legal regulation but in gospel liberty.

Differences over the Sabbath: **Bunyan, Gill, Gospel Standard Witness versus Westminster Confessional**

John Bunyan and John Gill both taught plainly that the seventh-day sabbath, given at the end of the creation week, was not binding upon all mankind. Bunyan argued that the sabbath was a sign of the covenant given to the Jews, not a universal ordinance imposed on Gentiles. Gill wrote:

“The seventh-day sabbath was given to the Jews alone, as a covenant sign. It was never given to the Gentiles, nor made binding upon the nations of the world.”
(John Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*)

For both Bunyan and Gill, the true rest was Christ Himself, not the observance of a day. The sabbath belonged to the Mosaic economy and passed away with it.

The Gospel Standard Articles of Religion stand in this same line. Article 16 declares that believers are “not under the law as a covenant of works”. By implication, the sabbath commandment, as part of that covenant, is not binding. The articles affirm gospel rest in Christ, not sabbath obligation.

By contrast, the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646) taught that the sabbath was a creation ordinance, binding on all men from the beginning. In their view, the sanctity of the seventh day was simply transferred to the first day, making the Christian sabbath a universal duty.

The Present Confusion

Here lies the present confusion. In recent years, certain men within Gospel Standard circles, having studied Westminster theology, have begun to read back its sabbatarianism into Gill, Bunyan, and even into the Gospel Standard Articles themselves. The result has been a misapplication and a serious mis-

reading. Rather than maintaining the liberty that is in Christ, the older gospel witness has been clouded with a false sabbatarianism. It is my conviction that this very error has taken hold of those ministers who have rejected me.

The truth, however, is clear. The sabbath was given to the Jews as a covenant sign (Exodus 31:16–17). It was never imposed upon Gentiles. It was a shadow, fulfilled in Christ, who is the believer’s true rest (Hebrews 4:3, 9–10). To import Westminster sabbatarianism into Gospel Standard teaching is to confuse law and gospel, and to obscure the testimony of Bunyan, Gill, and the Articles themselves.

Thus, the correction is needed. The sabbath was not a creational ordinance binding all men, but a Jewish covenant sign fulfilled in Christ. The Gospel Standard testimony is that the believer’s holiness lies in Him, not in the keeping of days.

Comparison: Bunyan, Gill, Gospel Standard Articles vs. Westminster Confession

This table shows the contrast between the teaching of John Bunyan, John Gill, and the Gospel Standard Articles of Religion, compared with the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646), on the subject of the Sabbath, the Law, and the Lord’s Day.

Aspect	Bunyan & Gill	Gospel Standard Articles	Westminster Confession (1646)
Creation Sabbath	Not binding on all mankind; no universal ordinance.	No mention of a creation-binding sabbath; believers not under the law.	Binding from creation on all men as a perpetual ordinance.
Who was it given to?	Given to the Jews as a covenant sign (Exodus 31:16–17); not for Gentiles.	By implication, part of the covenant of works from which believers are freed.	Binding on all humanity; transferred from 7th day to 1st day.
Nature of the Sabbath	A shadow, fulfilled in Christ.	Christ is the believer’s rest; no binding Sabbath law.	A moral commandment, requiring one day in seven to be kept holy.

Christian Day of Worship	First day observed for gospel worship by apostolic example, not Mosaic command.	Liberty to meet and worship on the Lord's Day, but not law-bound.	First day is the Christian sabbath, to be kept holy 'from morning to evening.'
Holiness and Rest	Holiness is in Christ alone; not in days.	Holiness is Christ's righteousness, not sabbath observance.	Holiness is tied to the sanctification of the Christian sabbath day.

A problem arises when men insist that the Sabbath day is a creational ordinance binding upon all men, and that the patriarchs — Adam, Seth, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob — all kept the Sabbath. The Scriptures, however, are plain: the Sabbath was given to Israel as a covenant sign under the Old Covenant, at the time when the manna was first given from heaven.

“See, for that the LORD hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.” (Exodus 16:29, KJV)

CHAPTER 8

The Sabbath and the Ten Commandments

To hold the view that the Sabbath is a creation ordinance binding upon all men, whether Jew or Gentile, is to conclude that whenever a person is converted and baptised, they are thereby bound to keep the Sabbath as given by Moses, and thus to uphold the Ten Commandments as a rule of life. Yet nowhere in the New Testament is there any command to change the seventh-day Sabbath to the first day of the week. It is true that the early disciples are recorded as meeting on the first day after the resurrection of Christ, but it is never taught that the first day replaced the Sabbath.

“Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.” (John 20:19, KJV)

“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.” (Acts 20:7, KJV)

“Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.” (1 Corinthians 16:2, KJV)

The Gospel Standard Position

Historically, this matter has been resolved among Gospel Standard Baptists, who maintain that the Gospel of Christ, and not the Law of Moses, is the rule of life for the believer. Yet they have been opposed by those who hold to the Westminster Confession of 1646, together with Presbyterians and others of like persuasion. The problem is that in later generations some ministers within the Gospel Standard connection have learned their theology from Westminster sources rather than from the Bible. This has resulted in renewed charges of antinomianism against those who faithfully maintain that the Law of Moses is not the believer’s rule of life, but that the Gospel of Christ alone is.

Duty Faith and Repentance

The Gospel Standard Articles plainly deny the doctrine of duty faith and duty repentance, maintaining that there is no indiscriminate offer of grace to all men. In contrast, the advocates of the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646) insist that saving faith and repentance are duties binding upon all who hear the gospel. This, however, overlooks the truth that to rest in Christ is a New Covenant blessing, not a legal duty of the Law, and that such faith can only be exercised by those who are regenerate.

The real question to be faced is this: Are all who hear the gospel required to believe that Christ died for them? The answer given by the Gospel Standard Baptists is a resounding no. For this reason, the denial of duty faith and duty repentance is set forth as an Article of Faith, and thus stands as a clear marker of their doctrinal position.

“For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” (Romans 7:9, KJV)

My first encounter with this kind of problem was joining the Berton Strict and Particular Baptist Church, in 1976 where I was required to subscribe to their articles of religion. Below is an extract from *Let Christian Men Be Men* that high light this problem. Taken from Chapter 3 Joining The Berton Strict And Particular Baptists.

Quotation

“At this stage, it seems right to explain how I came to join the church. I first came to Bierton in 1973, encouraged by a friend — Mr Alan Benning, from Wendover — who told me that the church upheld the doctrines of grace, and that Mr J. Hill, a Gospel Standard minister from Ebenezer Chapel in Luton, was soon due to preach at their anniversary service.

Eager to hear sound doctrine, I began attending their weeknight prayer meetings. I longed to hear once again those soul-stirring truths preached by the likes of William Huntington, William Gadsby, and John Kershaw. Their writings had done me much good — as they gave all the glory to the Lord Jesus Christ in salvation, and none to man.

Not long after I began attending, Mr Hill preached at the anniversary service. I had no knowledge at that time of the church’s manner of service, or how it was governed, nor of the variety of visiting ministers who came on the Lord’s Day.

My Beliefs at the Time

By then I was thoroughly persuaded of the infallibility of Holy Scripture, that it was the sole and sufficient rule for all faith and practice. I believed in one sovereign, true, and living God — self-existent and eternal — yet revealed in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Not three gods, but One, in perfect unity of essence.

I believed that Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of the Father, became truly man when He was born of the virgin. He did not cease to be God, but took upon Himself our human nature — yet without sin — and thus became the God-Man, the one Mediator between God and men.

It was this Jesus who had called me by His grace — not through the influence of any church or man, but directly, by the Spirit. It was this same Christ I sought when I attended Bierton and heard Mr Hill preach the doctrines of distinguishing grace with clarity and power. Aside from a recorded sermon by Dr Ian Paisley titled *Second Mile Religion*, I had not heard such preaching before.

Although I had once heard Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones, his ministry did not dwell as deeply upon the doctrines of grace — though he clearly

held to God's sovereignty.

Most churches I had attended up to that point were Arminian in doctrine — promoting a general love of God toward all mankind and a universal atonement, in contrast to the biblical doctrine of particular redemption.

Fellowship with Other Churches

Alan Benning also introduced me to the Strict Baptist Chapel at Linslade, where Mr Collier was pastor — another Gospel Standard minister. We attended an anniversary meeting where Mr Andrew Randall preached. I understood from our conversations that he had once been among the Brethren. He possessed a serious and doctrinally thoughtful spirit.

We began attending various anniversary services. I fondly recall visits to Waddesdon Hill Chapel, a Gospel Standard cause founded in 1752. We would often travel together — myself, Alan Benning, Bertha and Ruth Ellis, and Grace Knight — to these meetings, which were sweet times of fellowship.

Joining the Church

In time, I wrote to the church at Bierton expressing my desire for membership. I believed this was my duty, having been born again and baptised as a believer. I wished to support the cause of Christ locally.

I was received into membership on 8th January 1976 — though not without a problem.

The Articles of Religion: A Difficulty

When the Articles of Religion were presented to me, I realised they did not match the original Articles set forth in the church's Trust Deed of 1831. Two articles, in particular, caused me concern — I could not, in conscience, subscribe to them.

I brought the matter to Mr Hill of Ebenezer Chapel, Luton, who understood my difficulty. After reviewing the documents, we found that no proper record existed as to how these revised articles had come into use. Therefore, the church was bound to its original Articles of Religion, listed in the 1831 deed — not the spurious additions.

The church kindly agreed that I could be received based upon my confession of faith and my adherence to the original 1831 articles.

The Two Problem Articles

Article XII: “We believe that Christ has set apart a day of rest, to be kept holy and for His honour and glory, which is the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday.”

Referenced Scriptures: Mark 2:27, Acts 16:13, Hebrews 4:9

My concern was that these texts did not support the claim. In particular, Hebrews 4 does not refer to the seventh-day Sabbath, but to spiritual rest in Christ — as is beautifully expressed in Gadsby’s Hymn 636. I felt the article confused the believer’s rest with a legal Sabbath, failing to distinguish the gospel rule of life from the Law of Moses — a distinction upheld in Article 26 of the Gospel Standard Articles.

Article XVI: “We believe that all who die in their infancy go to heaven by virtue of the death of Christ.”

Referenced Scriptures: Matthew 19:13–15

Again, the verses cited do not teach this. The article seemed to deny the doctrine of original sin, and undermined the sovereign prerogative of God in mercy. Esau was hated before birth (Romans 9:11–13). Only those infants chosen in Christ will be saved — not all. And the scriptures nowhere state this belief explicitly. I could not affirm it as an article of faith.

The Bierton Articles of Religion

These were straightforward Calvinistic articles and I had personally made a hand writtin copy take from the Trust deed. These were a simplified version of the First London Baptists Confession 1644/46 2nd Edition in which there was no mention of the Sabbath or day of worship and the Bierton Church had meet for worship on a the Lord’s Day since 1831.

It was in January 1981 that the Bierton Church became a Gospel Standard cause, a matter I record in Chapter 19 of *Let Christian Men Be Men*, called **Bierton A Gospel Standard Cause. It was this move that caused me to study and examine the Gospel Standard**

Articles and compare them to or Bierton Strict Baptists articles of 1831 and it became clear these articles like Bierton, made no reference to a creational sabbath.

The Gospel Standard Articles of Faith on the Sabbath

The Gospel Standard Articles of Faith, adopted in 1878, contain **NO article that teaches the Sabbath to be a creational ordinance binding on all men.** Instead, their position is clear: the believer's rule of life is **the Gospel, not the Law of Moses.**

1. Overview

The Articles cover doctrines of God, election, redemption, calling, perseverance, baptism, the laying on of hands, and the Lord's Supper. However, there is no article devoted to the Sabbath, nor any statement that it was instituted at creation for all mankind.

2. Article 24 – The Believer's Rule of Life

The key statement comes in Article 24:

“We believe that the believer's rule of conduct is the Gospel, not the Law of Moses.”

This directly excludes the idea that the Ten Commandments, including the Sabbath, are binding upon believers as their rule of life. Instead, the Gospel of Christ is held forth as the rule of faith and practice.

3. Historical Understanding

Historically, Gospel Standard Strict Baptists rejected the notion of the Sabbath as a creation ordinance. They understood it to be a covenant sign given specifically to Israel, as stated in Exodus 31:16–17:

“Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.”

Thus, the Articles do not support the view that the Sabbath was binding on Adam or upon all nations. Rather, they affirm that believers are under the Gospel as their rule of life, and find their true rest in Christ.

Conclusion

The Gospel Standard Articles make no mention of the Sabbath being a creational ordinance. Instead, they affirm that the believer’s rule of life is the Gospel, not the Mosaic Law. This aligns with the understanding that the Sabbath was a covenant sign for Israel, fulfilled in Christ, and not binding on all men universally.

4. Comparison: Gospel Standard Articles vs Westminster Confession

To highlight the difference in doctrinal stance, the following table compares the position of the Gospel Standard Articles (1878) with that of the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646) regarding the Sabbath,

Gospel Standard Articles (1878)	Westminster Confession of Faith (1646)
Article 24: The believer’s rule of life is the Gospel, not the Law of Moses. No Sabbath as creation ordinance.	Chapter 21, Section 7–8: The Sabbath is a moral command, instituted at creation, binding on all men. Changed under the Gospel from the 7th day to the 1st day.
No command for Gentiles to observe the Sabbath; viewed as a covenant sign given uniquely to Israel (Exodus 31:16–17).	Affirms the Sabbath as perpetual for all mankind, to be observed as holy unto the Lord one day in seven.
Believers find their true rest spiritually in Christ (Hebrews 4; Matthew 11:28).	The Lord’s Day (first day of the week) is observed as the Christian Sabbath, in commemoration of Christ’s resurrection.

Conclusion

The Gospel Standard Articles make no mention of the Sabbath being a creational ordinance, whereas **the Westminster Confession explicitly affirms it as such**. This comparison shows the sharp contrast: the Gospel Standard position views the Sabbath as a covenant sign given to Israel and fulfilled in Christ, while the Westminster tradition views it as a perpetual moral command for all men, changed under the Gospel to the Lord’s Day.

CHAPTER 9

Why Gospel Standard Baptists are Accused of Antinomianism

Gospel Standard Baptists have often been accused of antinomianism—that

is, being ‘against the law.’ This accusation arises chiefly from their rejection of the Law of Moses, including the Ten Commandments, as the binding rule of life for believers. Instead, they affirm that Christ and the Gospel are the believer’s rule.

This essay explains why the accusation is made, and why Gospel Standard Baptists deny it as a false charge.

1. Source of the Accusation

The Gospel Standard Articles of Faith, adopted in 1878, state in Article 24:

“We believe that the believer’s rule of conduct is the Gospel, not the Law of Moses.”

This statement runs contrary to the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646), which teaches that the moral law, summed in the Ten Commandments, remains the rule of life for believers. Because Gospel Standard Baptists deny this, they are charged with antinomianism.

2. The Sabbath Question

One reason for the accusation is the rejection of the fourth commandment as binding. Gospel Standard Baptists understand the Sabbath to have been a covenant sign given to Israel, not a perpetual moral command. Exodus 31:16–17 makes this clear:

“Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.”

Because they deny the Sabbath as a universal ordinance, they are accused of lawlessness by those who insist on strict Sabbath observance.

3. Duty Faith and Duty Repentance

Another reason is their rejection of ‘duty faith’—the teaching that all men are duty-bound to believe savingly in Christ. Gospel Standard Baptists insist that saving faith is the gift of God to the elect, not a natural duty imposed on all. Ephesians 2:8–9 teaches:

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

Because they deny that saving faith is a natural man’s duty, critics accuse

them of hyper-calvinism and removing man's responsibility before God.

4. The True Position of Gospel Standard Baptists

The charge of antinomianism is false. Gospel Standard Baptists do not deny moral responsibility or godly living. Rather, they teach that the believer's obedience flows from union with Christ and the power of the Spirit, not from the external demands of the Mosaic law.

Romans 8:1–2 — “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”

Believers are led by the Spirit, and Christ Himself is their example and rule. As Jesus said:

John 13:15 — “For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.”

5. William Gadsby's Defence

William Gadsby, one of the leading Gospel Standard preachers, addressed the charge directly. He wrote:

“If men charge me with being an antinomian, because I tell sinners that salvation is in Christ and not in the law, I must bear it.”

Conclusion

The accusation of antinomianism arises because Gospel Standard Baptists deny that the Mosaic law, including the Ten Commandments, is the believer's rule of life, and because they reject duty faith and duty repentance. However, they affirm that believers live holy lives under the rule of Christ and the Gospel, by the power of the Spirit. Their position is not lawlessness, but true Gospel obedience rooted in Christ alone.

CHAPTER 10

J.C. Philpott, former Editor of The Gospel Standard magazine

This brief summarizes evidence that J. C. Philpott did not treat the weekly sabbath as a universal, creational ordinance and that in his own usage he preferred the biblical term “Lord's Day” rather than “Christian Sabbath.” Philpott's emphasis consistently places sabbath rest in Christ and reads the Mosaic sabbath typologically, not as a perpetual law binding all mankind.

1) Evidence from Philpot's theological emphases

Sabbath as type fulfilled in Christ: Philpot repeatedly frames rest as found in the Person and work of Christ, echoing New Testament themes that set sabbath “shadows” in relation to the substance found in Him.

Colossians 2:16–17 (KJV) — “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”

Matthew 11:28–29 (KJV) — “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

Hebrews 4:9–10 (KJV) — “There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.”

Law/Gospel alignment: Philpot's well-known law/gospel distinction rejects the Mosaic law as the believer's rule of life in a justifying sense. That posture does not support arguing for a continuing creational sabbath obligation via the Decalogue's fourth commandment.

Romans 6:14 (KJV) — “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”

Galatians 3:24–25 (KJV) — “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.”

2 Corinthians 3:7, 11 (KJV) — “But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: ... For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.”

Christ's lordship over the sabbath: Philpot's Christ-centered reading highlights Jesus' authority over the sabbath and the priority of mercy, further distancing the Christian from a Judaic legal rest.

Mark 2:27–28 (KJV) — “And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.”

Christian liberty regarding “days”: Philpot's pastoral tone accords with ap-

ostolic counsel not to bind consciences with sabbath-judgment, treating calendar observances as matters not to be imposed as necessary for righteousness.

Romans 14:5–6 (KJV) — “One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.”

2) Usage: “Lord’s Day” rather than “Christian Sabbath”

Across sermon headings and references, Philpot commonly uses the scriptural phrase “Lord’s Day.” The New Testament itself commends this title.

Revelation 1:10 (KJV) — “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,”

By adopting this language, Philpot identifies Christian worship with the first day of the week without importing the Mosaic civil-judicial sabbath rest, and he avoids the later phrase “Christian Sabbath.”

3) Synthesis

Putting these strands together, Philpot’s outlook treats the seventh-day sabbath as a shadow fulfilled in Christ, resists grounding Christian duty in the Decalogue as a covenant of works, and embraces first-day worship under the New Testament’s “Lord’s Day” pattern. This amounts to a rejection of a universal, creational sabbath obligation and of the terminology that would equate Sunday with the Mosaic sabbath.

CHAPTER 11

Law, Gospel, and the Charge of Antinomianism

The Charge of Antinomianism

I would make the matter plain. Amongst Particular Baptists and other Reformed believers, the cry of antinomianism is frequently raised against those who refuse to own the Law of Moses as the rule of life for the believer. Yet it is often the very men who cling to the Westminster Confession of Faith (1658) who thunder forth such accusations. These are the same who uphold the doctrines of duty faith and duty repentance — doctrines which, if

rightly considered, actually undermine their own charge. For such teaching requires the unbeliever to believe that Christ died for them, which may not be the case, and is a reality only known through the grace of saving faith.

In much the same way, the charge of Hyper-Calvinism is commonly levelled at those who deny duty faith and the indiscriminate offers of grace. But this charge too is unfounded. To deny that it is every man's duty to believe that Christ died for him is not to deny the free and gracious call of the gospel to all who are weary and heavy-laden. Rather, it is to safeguard the truth that saving faith is the gift of God, and that it is only by the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost that any soul is enabled to believe unto life eternal. Calvinism is brought when we deny duty faith and duty repentance.

The Law Under Moses

I say without hesitation: the Law of Moses was binding upon both the regenerate and the unregenerate alike, and both were obliged to keep it. The promises that accompanied the Law were no more than temporal blessings and outward rewards. To the regenerate, the Law served only to point unto Christ. But under the Gospel, things stand upon another footing. No minister has any warrant from God to exhort dead sinners to saving faith, for such exhortations belong to those whom the Holy Ghost has first awakened and made alive unto God.

Christ as Rule of Life

Therefore we utterly reject the notions of Duty Faith and Duty Repentance, and we deny the Law of Moses to be the rule of life for the believer. Christ, and Christ alone, is our rule, our righteousness, and our life. To set the believer under Moses is to bring him back into bondage; but to walk in Christ is liberty indeed.

Judaizers and the Christian Sabbath

I would further add that in the Apostles' day there were many Jews zealous for circumcision, who contended that Gentile believers must needs be circumcised. To this Paul took sharp exception, even going so far as to suggest with biting sarcasm that such men should go the whole way and cut off the male member altogether (Galatians 5:12). The spirit that insists upon binding the Christian Sabbath upon new believers is of the same kind. It is nothing but the old leaven of the Judaizers, whom the Apostles rightly branded as Hagarites.

Present Application

So it seems there is nothing new under the sun. This very minister, who

says my views are wrong, who claims to represent many others, and rejects me from fellowship among Gospel Standard Baptists, maintaining that my views of the Law, and the gospel rest believers have in Christ, are wholly derogatory and dishonour the Lord. But let it be known, these men do not represent the founders of the Gospel Standard Articles of Religion — such as Gadsby, Warburton, Kershaw, and Philpot. Their theology is borrowed from those aligned with the Westminster Confession and the Presbyterians, and not not the bible like men such as Bunyan or Gill. Such people William Huntington rightly called Hagareans.

Scripture Testimony

“For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” (Romans 7:9, KJV)

APPENDICES

1 MARTIN LUTHER THE SABBATH

(1483–1546)

The key figure of the Reformation, rejected the idea that the Sabbath (Saturday) was a binding law for Christians. Instead, he emphasized Sunday as a practical day for worship, not a divine command in the way the Jewish Sabbath was observed. Below are his key views on the Sabbath and Sunday worship.

1. Luther Rejected Sabbath as a Binding Law

Luther taught that the Sabbath was part of the Old Testament ceremonial law, which no longer applied to Christians because of Christ's fulfillment of the Law.

“The Sabbath is commanded to the Jews alone. If any prince, city, or village were to establish Sunday as a day of rest, it would not be because Moses commanded it, but because the rulers required it for the sake of good order and the well-being of society.”

(Against the Heavenly Prophets, 1525)

Luther argues that Christians are not bound to observe the Jewish Sabbath, and Sunday is observed for practical, not legal, reasons.

2. Luther and the Third Commandment (Fourth in Jewish/Christian Counting)

Luther discussed the Sabbath in his Large and Small Catechisms when explaining the Ten Commandments. However, he emphasized its spiritual meaning rather than a strict day of rest.

Luther's Small Catechism (1529)

“We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.”

(Small Catechism, Explanation of the Third Commandment)

Here, Luther reinterprets the Sabbath commandment as a call to honor God's Word every day, not just on a specific day of rest.

Luther's Large Catechism

“We Christians ought always to keep such a holy day and be occupied with

nothing but holy things—daily be engaged in God’s Word and carry it in our hearts and upon our lips. However, since we all do not have the time or ability to do this, we must set apart at least one day in the week for the sake of the young and the working class.”

(Large Catechism, Third Commandment)

Key points from this passage:

Worshiping God should happen every day.

Sunday was chosen for practical reasons, particularly for working people.

Christians are not bound by Old Testament Sabbath laws.

3. Sunday Worship Is a Practical Necessity, Not a Divine Law

Luther affirmed Sunday worship but saw it as a matter of Christian freedom, not a strict biblical command.

“If anywhere a day is made holy merely for the day’s sake—if anyone sets up its observance upon a Jewish foundation—then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to dance on it, to feast on it, to do anything that shall reprove this encroachment on Christian liberty.”

(On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church, 1520)

Here, Luther strongly opposed legalistic Sabbath-keeping, emphasizing Christian freedom over ritual observance.

4. Luther on Working on Sundays

Luther did not forbid work on Sundays, but he emphasized setting time aside for worship.

“Keep the Sabbath holy for its preaching’s sake. But if anywhere they make it a sin to work, then I order you to work, and to break such observance.”

(Table Talk, 1530s)

Key point:

The purpose of Sunday is to hear God’s Word, not to enforce rest as a law.

If someone makes Sunday rest a requirement, Luther encourages work to resist legalism.

5. Luther’s Influence on Later Sabbath Views

Lutherans today generally follow his approach—Sunday is a day of worship, but not a strict day of rest.

Puritans and later Protestants (e.g., Reformed, Presbyterian traditions) de-

veloped stricter Sunday observance (Christian Sabbath), but Luther himself did not teach this.

Luther's teaching influenced modern Christian views, leading to flexibility in Sunday observance.

Conclusion

Luther rejected the Jewish Sabbath as binding on Christians.

Sunday is a day for worship, not a strict day of rest.

Christian freedom allows work on Sunday if necessary.

The real purpose of the Sabbath is hearing God's Word daily, not just on one day.

2 JOHN CALVIN THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

(1509 1564)

Book II chapter 8

Fourth Commandment

Remember the Sabbath Day to Keep It Holy

"Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work, &c."

The purpose of this commandment is that, being dead to our own affections and works, we should focus on the kingdom of God. To aid in this, God has appointed specific means through which we are to meditate on Him. However, this commandment is unique compared to the others, so its interpretation requires a different approach.

Early Christian writers often referred to the Sabbath as a type, meaning its outward observance pointed to something greater and was abolished along with other ceremonial laws after Christ's advent. While this is true, it only addresses part of the matter. A deeper understanding is required, which includes three key aspects of its observance:

A Type of Spiritual Rest

The seventh-day rest was given as a symbol of the spiritual rest believers would experience in Christ. This rest signifies ceasing from our own works and allowing God to work in us.

A Day for Worship and Reflection

It was established as a designated day for the people of Israel to gather, hear the Law, perform religious rites, and meditate on God's works, helping them grow in piety.

A Day of Rest for All

It provided servants and those under authority a day of rest from labor, granting them a needed intermission from daily toil.

These three aspects highlight the deeper significance of the Sabbath commandment, pointing to both its historical role and its ultimate fulfillment in Christ, **our true rest**.

The First Purpose of the Sabbath: A Shadow of Spiritual Rest

The primary purpose of the Sabbath commandment was to serve as a shadow of spiritual rest. This idea is emphasized in many Scriptural passages, demonstrating that the Sabbath was more than just a day of physical rest—it pointed to God's sanctifying work in His people.

Throughout the Law and the Prophets, God strictly enforced Sabbath observance. When He rebuked Israel for abandoning true religion, He often highlighted their violation of the Sabbath. In doing so, He signified that disregarding the Sabbath was tantamount to rejecting His covenant. Conversely, keeping the Sabbath was regarded as a divine privilege, and the faithful placed great value on its revelation.

This is evident in Nehemiah 9:14, where the Levites publicly declared:

“Thou madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant.”

The Sabbath held a unique place among all the commandments of the Law because of what it represented. Both Moses and Ezekiel describe it as a sign of sanctification:

“Verily my Sabbaths shall ye keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.”

(Exodus 31:13-17)

Likewise, Ezekiel emphasizes that the Sabbath was a sign by which Israel would know that God is their sanctifier.

The True Meaning of Sabbath Rest

Since our sanctification requires the mortification of our own will, the analogy between the external Sabbath and spiritual rest in God is clear. True

Sabbath rest means:

Ceasing from our own works so that God's work in us is not hindered.
Submitting our will to God and yielding our hearts to Him.
Turning away from the lusts of the flesh to live in the Spirit.
Resting in God as He works in us, as taught by the Apostle Paul:

“Exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we which have believed do enter into rest... There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.”

(Hebrews 3:13; 4:3,9)

Section 30

Thus, the Sabbath was a type—pointing to Christ, in whom we find our true rest.

The Significance of the Seventh Day and the Perpetuity of the Sabbath

The Meaning of the Number Seven

In Scripture, the number seven often symbolizes perfection and completion. In this sense, the Sabbath may also signify its fulfillment at the last day, pointing to eternal rest in God.

For the Jews, the observance of one day in seven was meant to symbolize complete rest in God. To reinforce this, the Lord set an example by resting on the seventh day of creation. Knowing that they were imitating their Creator encouraged them to observe it faithfully.

If one seeks a deeper meaning in the number seven, it is likely that God chose it to represent the perpetual nature of the Sabbath—a rest that will not be fully realized until the final day. Even now, believers begin their blessed rest in Christ, growing in it daily. However, because we still struggle against the flesh, our Sabbath will not be complete until God's ultimate purpose is fulfilled:

“From one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord.”

(Isaiah 66:23)

“Then shall God be all in all.”

(1 Corinthians 15:28)

Thus, the seventh day serves as a symbol of the future perfection of Sabbath rest, calling believers to meditate continually upon it throughout their lives, looking forward to its full realization in eternity.

The True Sabbath Rest and Avoiding Superstition

If these interpretations of the number seven seem unnecessary to some, a simpler understanding is sufficient:

God appointed a specific day to train His people under the Law, so they would always meditate on spiritual rest.

He chose the seventh day either because it was sufficient or to reinforce His own example.

The Sabbath's true purpose was to conform believers to their Creator, not merely to impose physical rest.

The key truth of the Sabbath remains: it symbolizes perpetual rest from our works. The prophets continually reminded the Jews not to treat the Sabbath as mere outward observance but to understand its deeper spiritual significance:

“If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord.”

(Isaiah 58:13-14)

The Sabbath Fulfilled in Christ

However, with the coming of Jesus Christ, the ceremonial aspect of the Sabbath was abolished. Christ is the substance, and when the reality is present, the shadows disappear:

“We are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life.”

(Romans 6:4)

“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy

day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”

(Colossians 2:16-17)

Here, “the body” refers to the full reality of Christ. The true Sabbath rest is not limited to one day but extends to the entire course of a believer’s life. We must not only cease from outward labor but also from reliance on our own works, striving instead to be filled with the life of God.

Avoiding Superstitious Observance

Since Christ has fulfilled the true Sabbath, **believers should avoid superstitious observance of days**. The Christian life calls for a perpetual Sabbath, where **we live daily in the reality of Christ’s rest**.

The Second and Third Purposes of the Sabbath Commandment

The two remaining purposes of the Sabbath are not merely ceremonial shadows but apply to all ages. Though the Sabbath as a legal ordinance has been abolished, two key principles remain relevant:

1. Gathering for Public Worship

Believers should assemble on stated days to hear the Word of God, partake in the breaking of bread, and engage in public prayer.

This was observed by the Jews, as seen in Deuteronomy 5:14 and Exodus 23:12, which also extended rest to servants and laborers.

2. Providing Rest for Servants and Workers

God’s law also provided a merciful provision for servants, laborers, and even animals, ensuring they were given a day of rest.

This principle remains valid, as it reflects God’s care for all His creation.

Since religious assemblies are commanded in Scripture, they must be held in an orderly manner. Paul instructs that “*all things be done decently and in order*” (1 Corinthians 14:40). Without set meeting times, chaos would ensue, leading to the disruption of the Church. Since these reasons for Sabbath observance still apply, we cannot dismiss the importance of gathering for worship.

The Lord’s Day and Avoiding Jewish Superstition

Some argue that observing the Lord’s Day makes Christians guilty of returning to Judaism. However, this misunderstands the distinction between the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Lord’s Day.

The Jewish Sabbath was a ceremonial law pointing to Christ, which Paul warns against reinstating (Colossians 2:16, Galatians 4:10-11, Romans 14:5).

The early Church observed the first day of the week, not as a legal requirement, but for orderly worship and Christian unity (1 Corinthians 16:2).

Paul opposed superstitious observance of days, but this does not mean there should be no regular worship gatherings. The problem was not setting aside a day for worship but treating the day itself as sacred in a legalistic manner.

“If superstition is to be avoided, there was greater danger in keeping the Jewish Sabbath than the Lord’s Day.”

Thus, the Jewish Sabbath was abolished, and the Church established a different day of worship to maintain order, discipline, and peace in Christian society.

The Lord’s Day: A Sign of Christ’s Fulfillment

The early Christians did not change the Sabbath arbitrarily—they observed the Lord’s Day to honor Christ’s resurrection, which fulfilled the true meaning of the Sabbath rest.

The resurrection of Christ was the completion of true rest, making the Jewish Sabbath unnecessary.

The Lord’s Day reminds us not to cling to ceremonial traditions but to focus on the substance: Christ Himself.

We are not bound to the number seven, nor do we impose strict observance of one particular day, as long as it is free from superstition and serves the purpose of orderly worship.

The Purpose of Christian Worship

The Sabbath was a type, but the reality is now fulfilled in Christ. Our responsibility as Christians is:

To seek spiritual rest in Christ, ceasing from our own works so that God may work in us.

To engage in private devotion and public worship, following the order set

by the Church—through the preaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, and corporate prayer.

To ensure that those under our authority are not oppressed by constant labor, reflecting God’s merciful intent in the commandment.

This guards against the false teachings of those who insist that only the ceremonial part of the Sabbath was abolished, while still requiring one day in seven to be observed as a law. This is nothing but a legalistic modification of the Jewish practice, merely changing the day while keeping the same superstition.

“We must avoid the errors of false teachers who impose legalistic Sabbath-keeping, while also ensuring that religion does not fade by neglecting public worship.”

Final Summary

The Lord’s Day is not a binding law but serves a practical and spiritual purpose for Christian worship.

The Christian Sabbath is not about observing a specific day, but about finding true rest in Christ.

External religious observance must not replace true worship in spirit and truth.

Thus, while we diligently attend religious gatherings and use external aids to promote the worship of God, **we reject the legalistic views that lead to superstitious sabbatism.**

3 THEADO BEZA REFORMED THEOLOGY

(1519–1605)

The successor of John Calvin and a key figure in the Reformation, wrote about the Sabbath in the context of Reformed theology. His views largely followed Calvin’s teaching but also contributed to further debates on Sabbatarianism (the idea of strict Sabbath observance). Below are key insights into Beza’s perspective on the Sabbath:

1. Beza’s Reformed Understanding of the Sabbath

Beza, like Calvin, did not see the Sabbath (Saturday) as binding for Christians.

He believed that Sunday (the Lord’s Day) replaced the Jewish Sabbath, as

established by the early church.

He rejected the idea that Christians must keep the Sabbath as a strict day of rest, but he emphasized that a set day for worship was necessary for maintaining order in the church.

Beza on the Moral and Ceremonial Aspects of the Sabbath

Beza distinguished between:

The moral aspect of the Sabbath – This refers to the universal principle of setting aside regular time for worship.

The ceremonial aspect of the Sabbath – This was the specific Jewish observance (Saturday rest), which was fulfilled in Christ.

According to Beza, Christians are not bound by the Jewish Sabbath law but must still observe a regular day for worship. This aligns with the Fourth Commandment, but in a spiritual rather than a legalistic sense.

2. Beza and the Lord's Day (Sunday Worship)

Beza affirmed that the New Testament Church had chosen Sunday as the day of worship because:

It honored Christ's resurrection.

It followed the apostolic tradition (Acts 20:7, Revelation 1:10).

He rejected rigid Sabbatarian views that treated Sunday exactly like the Jewish Sabbath.

Beza's Opposition to Extreme Sabbatarianism

Beza opposed Puritan Sabbatarianism, which treated Sunday as a strict day of rest similar to the Jewish Sabbath.

He argued that while Sunday should be devoted to worship, prayer, and teaching, it did not require total cessation of work.

This contrasted with later English Puritans, who pushed for a stricter Sunday observance.

3. Beza's Theological Influence on the Sabbath Debate

Beza helped shape the Reformed Church's moderate stance on the Sabbath.

He followed Calvin's idea that the Sabbath law was fulfilled in Christ, and Sunday worship was a matter of church order, not divine law.

His writings influenced both Presbyterian and Continental Reformed traditions.

Conclusion

Beza rejected the Jewish Sabbath as binding for Christians.

He supported Sunday as a day for corporate worship, based on early Christian tradition.

He rejected strict Sabbatarianism but upheld the importance of a regular day of worship.

4 WILLIAM TINDALE THE SABBATH

(1563)

“As for the Sabbath—a great matter—we are lords over the Sabbath and may change it to Monday or any other day if needed. We may even designate every tenth day as a holy day if there is reason to do so, or make two in a week if one is not enough for teaching the people. There was no particular reason to change it from Saturday except to differentiate ourselves from the Jews and to avoid becoming enslaved to the day as they were in their superstition. In truth, we do not need a holy day at all if the people could be taught without it.”

Tyndale emphasizes Christian freedom from legalistic Sabbath observance, arguing that the day itself holds no binding significance and can be altered as needed for practical purposes. He rejects the idea that the Sabbath is sacred in itself, stressing that believers should not become servants to the day as the Jews did.

5 JOHN FIRTH ON THE ABROGATION OF THE SABBATH

(1533)

John Frith was a close companion of William Tyndale and was martyred—burned at the stake—by order of Thomas More. His stance on the abolition of ceremonial observances aligns with Tyndale’s teaching.

“The Sabbath was instituted and commanded by God for Israel. However, since it was a sign and a ceremony, symbolizing that it is God who sanctifies His people by His Spirit—and not their own works—it ceased, along with all other ceremonies and shadows, when Christ came. The early Church, recognizing Christian liberty, abrogated the Sabbath to teach that the keeping of any day is not necessary for salvation, according to Paul: ‘Ye observe days, times, and months—I am afraid of you, lest I have labored in vain toward you’ (Galatians 4:10-11).”

“Still, because it was necessary to set aside a day for people to gather and hear the Word of God, the early Church replaced the Sabbath (Saturday) with Sunday, the first day of the week. Though they could have

kept Saturday as an indifferent matter, they wisely chose to change the day—as a perpetual reminder that we are free from bondage to the Law and are not bound to any specific day. We may perform any lawful work to the glory of God and the benefit of our neighbor.”

Warning Against Sunday Superstition

“Yet, we have become as superstitious about Sunday as the Jews were about Saturday—indeed, even worse! The Jews at least have the Word of God for keeping the seventh day, as they were commanded to do so. But we have no direct command from God to observe Sunday as we do. Instead, Scripture warns us: ‘Let no man judge you concerning holy days, meats, and other outward things’ (Colossians 2:16).”

“Paul insists that no man should regard one day as holier than another. The Lord’s Day was established for the purpose of assembling together to hear the Word of God, receive the sacraments, and give thanks to God. Once that is done, believers are free to go home and conduct their business as on any other day.”

Freedom from Legalism

“Anyone who believes it is a sin to work on a holy day must be properly instructed. If he remains obstinate, believing that God has forbidden labor on such a day, he is not of God but of the devil—for he makes that a sin which God has left free.”

Tyndale and Frith on the Sabbath

1. The Sabbath was a ceremonial law for Israel and ceased with Christ’s fulfillment of the Law.
2. The early Church replaced the Sabbath (Saturday) with Sunday to allow for gathering and worship, not because the day itself was sacred.
3. Christians are not bound to any specific day—every day is an opportunity to serve and worship God.
4. Legalistic Sabbath-keeping distorts the Gospel and makes believers slaves to an unnecessary burden.
5. Observing the Lord’s Day should not be treated superstitiously—it is a means of order and worship, not a command of law.

Both Tyndale and Frith strongly argue against treating any day as a bind-

ing law for Christians. Instead, they emphasize Christian liberty and warn against the same kind of superstition that led the Jews to enslave themselves to external observances.

6 JAN HUS THE SABBATH

(1369-1415)

Jan Hus, the Czech reformer and predecessor to Martin Luther, did not specifically promote the seventh-day Sabbath (Saturday) as a binding Christian practice. However, his teachings on worship, Christian obedience, and the authority of Scripture influenced later movements, including some groups that embraced Sabbath observance.

1. Hus' View on Worship and the Lord's Day

Hus accepted Sunday as the Christian day of worship, following early church tradition.

However, he strongly opposed the Catholic Church's rigid Sunday laws, which required people to observe it under penalty.

He taught that obedience to God's Word mattered more than outward religious rituals.

Quote from Jan Hus:

"The essence of Christian faith is not in external ceremonies but in a heart devoted to God and in obedience to His Word."

(Sermons and Writings of Jan Hus, c. 1410s)

Analysis:

This does not reject Sunday worship but emphasizes that true faith is about internal devotion rather than ceremonial obligations.

2. Did Jan Hus Reject the Catholic Church's Sunday Enforcement?

Yes. Like John Wycliffe, Hus challenged the way the Catholic Church imposed Sunday observance:

He criticized the Church's legalistic approach to religious observance, including compulsory Sunday rest.

He believed that the Pope and clergy had no right to impose unscriptural burdens on believers.

Hus on Church Authority:

“The Pope or a bishop cannot establish any law that is contrary to Christ’s command. If they do so, we are not bound to obey.”

(De Ecclesia, “On the Church”, 1413)

Analysis:

Hus implied that Sunday observance should not be forced, just as other Catholic traditions had no biblical basis.

3. Did Jan Hus Keep the Saturday Sabbath?

There is no historical evidence that Jan Hus or his early followers observed the seventh-day Sabbath.

However, later Hussite movements (especially in Bohemia and Moravia) came into contact with Sabbatarian groups.

By the 15th and 16th centuries, some Hussites began keeping the Sabbath under the influence of Waldensians and Anabaptists.

Historical Reference (Johannes Wolff, 1571 AD):

“Among the Bohemians, some have solemnized the seventh day, others have kept Sunday.”

(Lectionum Memorabilium et Reconditarum, Vol. 2, p. 361)

Analysis:

While Hus himself did not promote Sabbath observance, some of his later followers did.

4. The Hussite Influence on Sabbath-Keeping Groups

After Hus’ execution in 1415, the Hussite movement split into different factions.

Some groups embraced a more radical approach, leading to early Protestant Sabbatarians in Bohemia and Moravia.

While Hus himself did not teach Sabbath observance, his theological descendants contributed to later Sabbatarian movements.

Further Reading:

De Ecclesia (On the Church) – Jan Hus, 1413

Lectionum Memorabilium et Reconditarum – Johannes Wolff (1571)
History of the Bohemian Brethren – E.A. de Schweinitz (1885)

Jan Hus (c. 1369–1415), the Czech reformer, did not produce writings specifically addressing the designated day for Christian worship. His primary focus was on church reform, emphasizing the authority of Scripture, moral integrity of the clergy, and the nature of the Church.

In his seminal work, *De Ecclesia* (“On the Church”), Hus critiques the ecclesiastical hierarchy and underscores that Christ, not the pope, is the true head of the Church. He asserts that the Church comprises all predestined believers, not just the clergy or those within the Roman Catholic institution. This perspective challenges the established norms of his time.

C.S. Lewis Institute

While Hus did not explicitly address the specific day of worship, his emphasis on aligning Christian practices with Scripture suggests he advocated for worship that was biblically grounded rather than strictly adhering to institutional mandates. This approach implies that the sincerity and authenticity of worship were more important than the specific day on which it was conducted.

In summary, although Jan Hus did not write directly about which day Christians should worship, his broader theological principles highlight the importance of scriptural authority and genuine faith over rigid adherence to traditional practices.

7 JOHN WYCLIFFE THE SABBATH

(1320–1384)

The English theologian and reformer, addressed the issue of the Sabbath and Sunday worship with a perspective that aligned with his broader criticisms of the Catholic Church. While he did not advocate for a return to seventh-day Sabbath observance (Saturday), he was critical of how the Church enforced Sunday worship and its rigid laws surrounding it.

Wycliffe’s Views on the Sabbath and Sunday Worship:

Authority of Scripture Over Church Traditions – Wycliffe emphasized the Bible as the supreme authority in Christian life and teaching. He argued that many Catholic traditions, including rigid Sunday observance laws, were human inventions rather than biblical commands.

Criticism of Legalism and Church Control – Wycliffe opposed the idea that strict Sunday observance was a requirement for salvation. He viewed the Church's enforcement of Sunday laws as a form of legalism that distracted from the true essence of Christian faith—living according to the teachings of Christ rather than blindly following ecclesiastical mandates.

Distinction Between Moral and Ceremonial Law – Like many reformers, Wycliffe recognized the moral significance of rest and worship but did not see the Sabbath (Saturday) as a binding requirement for Christians. He accepted Sunday as a day of worship but objected to the way the Church imposed unnecessary restrictions on it.

Rejection of Church-Imposed Holy Days – Wycliffe questioned the excessive number of holy days established by the Catholic Church, including Sunday laws that were enforced through civil and religious penalties. He believed that worship should be a matter of personal devotion rather than dictated by institutional rules.

of the Church exercising undue control over people's lives.

Did Wycliffe Promote Seventh-Day Sabbath Observance?

No, Wycliffe did not advocate for the observance of Saturday as the Sabbath. He accepted Sunday as the customary day for Christian worship but opposed the way the Catholic Church imposed it through strict laws and penalties. His main concern was the corruption of the Church and its imposition of non-biblical traditions rather than a push to reinstate seventh-day Sabbath worship.

Influence on Later Reformers

Wycliffe's views on Sunday worship and church authority influenced later reformers, such as Jan Hus and Martin Luther, who also rejected the Catholic Church's rigid enforcement of Sunday laws and other traditions not explicitly based on Scripture.

Conclusion

John Wycliffe did not reject Sunday worship itself, but he opposed the way the Church enforced it as a sacred day through legal means. He emphasized that worship should be a matter of personal faith rather than dictated by Church law. While he acknowledged the biblical Sabbath as the seventh day, he did not call for its reinstatement, focusing instead on the broader issue of church corruption and the need for biblical truth in Christian practice.

8 DR. JOHN GILL D.D. PLACE AND TIME OF WORSHIP

(1697-1771)

Dr. John Gill, a prominent 18th-century Baptist theologian, discusses the circumstances of public worship in terms of place and time. He examines historical worship practices from biblical times, the transition from the Jewish Sabbath to the Christian Lord's Day, and how believers should observe worship today.

Summary

1. Place of Worship

Gill traces the development of worship places through biblical history:

In the early biblical era, worship locations were uncertain. The cherubim at the entrance of Eden may have symbolized divine presence.

The patriarchs worshipped in different locations, often building altars (e.g., Abraham at Bethel, Jacob at Luz).

The first fixed place of worship was the Tabernacle, established in the wilderness, which later moved to Gilgal, Shiloh, Nob, and Gibeon.

The permanent Temple in Jerusalem became the main place of worship, but after its destruction and Jewish exile, synagogues were established as local places of prayer and scripture reading.

With the arrival of Christ, worship became universal, no longer confined to a temple or specific location, as Jesus declared to the Samaritan woman (John 4:20-21). Worship could now take place "in spirit and truth" anywhere.

2. Time of Worship

Gill provides a theological argument regarding the observance of a set day for worship:

He disputes the claim that the seventh-day Sabbath (Saturday) was divinely instituted at creation.

Instead, he argues that the Sabbath was first officially introduced during the giving of the manna in the wilderness (Exodus 16:23-26), and later confirmed at Mount Sinai for Israel only.

The Sabbath was meant as a covenantal sign between God and Israel, not a universal command for all nations.

He critiques the claim that the patriarchs before Moses observed the Sabbath, asserting there is no biblical evidence of it.

The Jewish Sabbath was abolished under the New Covenant, replaced by the first day of the week (Sunday), the Lord's Day, in honor of Christ's resurrection.

3. The Lord's Day (Sunday) as the Christian Day of Worship

Gill argues that Christians are not bound to keep the Jewish Sabbath.

The first day of the week was observed by the early church, based on:

Jesus appearing to His disciples on resurrection Sunday.

The Holy Spirit's outpouring at Pentecost, which fell on a Sunday.

Paul's instructions to the Corinthians to collect offerings on the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:1-2).

John's reference to the "Lord's Day" in Revelation 1:10, understood as Sunday.

Early church fathers such as Ignatius, Justin Martyr, and Tertullian affirmed Sunday as the Christian day of worship.

Gill insists the first day of the week is not a legalistic "Christian Sabbath" but a day of worship, characterized by prayer, preaching, and edification.

4. Proper Observance of the Lord's Day

Christians should not observe it as a strict Jewish Sabbath with excessive legalism.

However, ordinary work should cease, except for acts of mercy, necessity, and worship.

The day should be fully dedicated to spiritual activities:

- Public worship
- Hearing sermons
- Private devotion and prayer
- Scripture reading and meditation

Worldly activities such as business dealings, recreation, and unnecessary travel should be avoided.

Analysis and Theological Implications

Sabbath vs. Lord's Day Debate

Gill's argument aligns with Reformed and Baptist theology, which holds that the Jewish Sabbath was ceremonial and temporary.

He challenges the Seventh-Day Sabbatarian view, emphasizing that Sunday is not the "Christian Sabbath" but a distinct day for worship.

His reasoning has significantly influenced Baptist and Protestant Sunday observance.

While opposing strict Sabbath laws, he emphasizes dedicating the Lord's Day to spiritual growth.

Conclusion

Dr. John Gill presents a historical, biblical, and theological case for Sunday worship over the Jewish Sabbath. His argument is well-grounded in scripture, church history, and covenant theology. While rejecting legalistic Sabbath observance, he encourages believers to honor the Lord's Day as a time of worship, devotion, and rest in Christ's finished work.

9 GILBERT BEEBE THE SABBATH

(January 1, 1855)

Is the Sabbath a Perpetual Obligation?

Many people today argue that observing a Sabbath day is a universal and perpetual obligation for all humanity. However, Scripture does not provide a clear command supporting this claim. Those who hold this view rarely refer to the fourth commandment of the Decalogue (Ten Commandments), likely for the following reasons:

The Sabbath Was Given Only to Israel

Moses himself stated that the covenant, including the Ten Commandments, was made exclusively with the Israelites who were present when it was given (Deuteronomy 5:1-4).

Even the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) were never commanded to keep the Sabbath.

The Fourth Commandment Specifies the Seventh Day, Not the First

The Israelites were required to observe the seventh day (Saturday) because God rested on that day after creation.

The first day of the week (Sunday) was never commanded as a Sabbath in the Law.

The Sabbath Commandment Required Complete Rest, Unlike Modern Sunday Observance (1851 in America)

The Israelites were commanded to completely abstain from labor—not only them, but also their wives, children, servants, and even their animals.

They were forbidden from kindling fires, traveling, or engaging in religious gatherings such as Sabbath schools or collections for missions (Exodus 35:3).

This differs significantly from how Christians today observe the first day of the week.

The Penalty for Breaking the Sabbath Was Death

Under Jewish law, breaking the Sabbath was punishable by stoning to

death (Numbers 15:32-36).

In contrast, modern laws merely impose fines or imprisonment for violating Sunday observance.

The Fourth Commandment Also Required Six Days of Work

It explicitly commanded labor on the first six days of the week, including Sunday.

Modern laws that prohibit work on Sundays contradict this part of the commandment.

The Law Cannot Be Partially Observed

If the Sinai Covenant (which included the Ten Commandments) is binding on Gentiles in any way, then it must be binding in its entirety. Scripture is clear that breaking one part of the Law means breaking all of it:

“For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.”

(James 2:10)

Likewise, Paul states:

“I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law.”

(Galatians 5:3)

Nowhere in Scripture are people commanded to obey only part of the Law. The Law speaks only to those who are under it, and they must follow it completely (Romans 3:19).

If the whole Sinai Law were binding on all people for all time, then everyone would be under its curse, making salvation impossible. The Bible declares:

“For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse... by works of the law no one will be justified.”

(Galatians 3:10-11)

Christ Has Redeemed Believers from the Law

The gospel reveals that Christ has redeemed His people not only from the curse of the Law but also from its dominion:

“You are no longer under the law, but under grace.”

(Romans 6:14)

Paul rebuked the Galatians for turning back to the Law’s requirements, saying:

“You observe days and months and seasons and years! I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.”

(Galatians 4:10-11)

Paul also uses Hagar and Sarah as an allegory of the two covenants (Galatians 4:21-31). Hagar, the slave woman, represents Mount Sinai and the old covenant, which brings bondage. Sarah, the free woman, represents Jerusalem above, the mother of all true believers, who live in freedom.

Additionally, Paul declares in Colossians:

“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;”

(Colossians 2:14-17)

Therefore, let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food, drink, festivals, new moons, or Sabbaths. These are a shadow of things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.”

The Sabbath and other ordinances of the old covenant were shadows that pointed to Christ. Now that the reality has come, believers have entered the true rest in Him.

The True Sabbath Rest in Christ

The New Testament Sabbath is not the observance of a literal day, but rather the spiritual rest found in Christ. This is clearly taught in Hebrews 3 and 4:

The Old Covenant Sabbath Was for Israel Alone

It was given only to circumcised Israelites, not to all nations.

The true Sabbath rest is given only to spiritual Israel, those who worship God in Spirit and truth (Philippians 3:3).

True Sabbath Rest Is Entered by Faith, Not by Observing a Day

Many Israelites failed to enter the Promised Land because of unbelief.

Likewise, those who doubt their standing in Christ struggle to rest in Him.

The gospel Sabbath is the believer's assurance in Christ, not the keeping of an outward law.

The Gospel Sabbath Is Ceasing from Our Own Works

Under the old covenant, Israelites had to cease from labor on the Sabbath.

Under the gospel, believers are called to cease from their own works and rest in Christ's righteousness (Hebrews 4:9-10).

True Worship Is in Spirit and Truth, Not in Observing Special Days

Jesus declared:

"The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

(John 4:23)

New Testament believers are not required to observe special days, as faith in Christ is the true fulfillment of the Sabbath.

Freedom in Christ: No Obligation to Keep the Sabbath

Believers are not obligated to observe any particular day as a Sabbath. However, Christians do have the freedom to gather for worship at appointed times:

The first day of the week (Sunday) is a suitable time for worship, as the apostles often gathered on this day (Acts 20:7).

However, no special holiness is attached to the first day or any other day.

The church has the liberty to set times for worship, but should not impose legalistic requirements on members.

Paul warns against allowing human laws to bind the conscience:

“Stand fast in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.”

(Galatians 5:1)

Conclusion: The True Sabbath Rest

The old covenant Sabbath was outward and ceremonial. Any circumcised Jew, believer or unbeliever, could keep it by abstaining from labor. However, the true Sabbath requires faith in Christ.

True Sabbath rest is not about one day out of seven, but about resting in Christ's finished work.

Those who insist on keeping the Law for righteousness are violating the gospel Sabbath and must be rebuked with the truth of the gospel.

True freedom is found in Christ alone:

“If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.”

(John 8:36)

Believers are called to rest in Christ, not in the observance of days.

10 WILLIAM HUNTINGTON OLD TESTAMENT SABBATH

(1745–1813)

The Old Testament Sabbath was a foreshadowing of the gospel era, in which believers find rest. This rest is from rebellion against God, from striving to earn salvation through the law, and from the unbearable burden of sin. It also points to the ultimate rest in heaven, where sin will no longer dwell within us.

The Law of Faith

Christ died to atone for my sins and rose again to secure my justification. He

now intercedes on my behalf and will bring justice for all wrongs. Because I am in Christ, there is no condemnation for me or for anyone who belongs to Him. The law of faith, by which I now live, is written on my heart. Through the Spirit of life in Christ, I have been set free from both the power of sin within me and the law of death that was engraved on stone tablets.

Freedom from the Law

The believer's deliverance from the law is described in the strongest possible terms in Scripture, emphasizing the joy and gratitude we should have for our freedom in Christ. The Bible declares that we are:

Dead to the law (Romans 7:4)

Redeemed from the law (Galatians 3:13)

Delivered from the law (Romans 7:6)

No longer under the law (Romans 6:14)

Furthermore, the new covenant has made the old covenant obsolete. The law has been done away with (2 Corinthians 3:11) and abolished (2 Corinthians 3:13).

The Christian Sabbath and Gospel Rest

It is incorrect to tell an unregenerate person that they must observe the Christian Sabbath, for they cannot rest in Christ. The gospel is not a legal obligation imposed on any man. Instead, the rest to which believers are called is found through faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. This call to rest is directed to the "new man" who has been transformed by grace.

The Lord's Day, or Christian day of rest, is not the same as the Mosaic Sabbath. The command to observe the Sabbath was a legal requirement for all who were under the old covenant—both the regenerate and the unregenerate. Under the law, even a regenerate man had to look beyond the written commands and seek the spiritual meaning of the law to find true rest. The law itself was merely a shadow pointing forward to the gospel and the rest found in Christ, a rest hidden from those who do not believe.

As Scripture states:

“Let no man therefore judge you in food, or in drink, or regarding a holy day, or the new moon, or the Sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.” (Colossians 2:16-17, KJV)

Conclusion

William Gadsby beautifully expressed this truth in the following hymn:

363

The Sabbath was a day of rest,
The day the Lord Jehovah blessed,
A living type of Christ;
The laboring poor may venture here,
The guilty banish all their fear,
And lean on Jesus' breast.

Thus, the Sabbath was always meant to point to Christ—the true and eternal rest for God's people.

11 J.C. PHILPOT LAW, GOSPEL STANDARD EDITOR

(1802-1868)

I shall take the occasion to offer my thoughts on these three distinct points:

Why the law is not the believer's rule of life.

What is the believer's rule of life?

Refuting the objection that our views lead to doctrinal or practical antinomianism.

By a believer, I understand one who, through faith in Christ, is delivered from the curse and bondage of the law and who knows, by experience, something of the life, light, liberty, and love of the glorious gospel of the grace of God. By the law, I primarily mean the Law of Moses, though not exclusively. By the rule of life, I mean an outward and inward guide by which a believer directs his walk and conduct before God, the Church, and the world.

It is essential to bear strictly in mind that we are speaking solely of the be-

liever. What relationship does the law have with a believer in Christ Jesus? Is he required by the revealed will of God to take the law as his guiding rule in life? I answer: No, and for several reasons.

1. The Law Cannot Be Divided

God does not leave us at liberty to accept one part of the law while rejecting another. It must be taken as a whole or left as a whole, for God has revealed it as such. Nowhere in Scripture can I find any mitigation of its terms or any division that allows us to be dead to it as a covenant while still alive to it as a rule. The essential characteristic of the law is that it is a covenant of works, demanding full and perfect obedience, with a curse attached to even the smallest infringement.

If I, as a believer, take the law as my rule of life, I take it with its curse. I place myself under its yoke, for by receiving it as my guide (and if I do not do this, it is not my rule), I subject myself to its conditions and penalties. This inseparable connection between the covenant and its rules is clearly shown in Galatians 5:1-6, where the apostle testifies that “every man that is circumcised is a debtor to the whole law.” It is futile to claim that one can accept the law as a rule of life without accepting it as a covenant. The two are inseparable. As James 2:10 states, “He who keeps the whole law but offends in one point is guilty of all.” Thus, the Galatians, by taking circumcision as their rule, were bound to the entire law, bringing themselves under its curse.

2. The Law Is a Covenant, Not a Rule

People often speak fluently of the law being a rule of life without considering the consequences. If the law is a rule, then its written precepts, not merely its spirit, must be followed. These precepts belong to the law as a covenant and were never separated from it by divine authority.

The Epistle to the Galatians primarily addresses this issue. The Galatians, looking to the law rather than the gospel, had begun in the Spirit but were attempting to be made perfect by the flesh. Paul sternly rebukes them, calling them “foolish Galatians” and asking, “Who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the truth?” (Galatians 3:1). He reminds them that they received the Spirit, not by the works of the law, but by the hearing of faith.

Furthermore, Paul instructs them to “walk in the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16).

To walk is to live and act, and Paul does not give the law as the rule of life but the Spirit. He emphasizes the blessing of this divine leading: “If ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law” (Galatians 5:18). This means that believers are free from the law’s curse and its commands as a burdensome yoke. Instead, Paul directs them to fulfill “the law of Christ,” which is love—a fruit of the Spirit, not the product of the law, which only works wrath and bondage (Romans 4:15; Galatians 4:24).

3. The Believer’s True Rule of Life

If we abide by the inspired Word of Truth, we need look no further than this very Epistle to settle the matter. Paul declares that the rule by which believers should walk is the “new creature” (Galatians 6:15-16). The law, being a covenant of works, knows nothing of mercy or grace and does not communicate the Spirit. Why, then, should a believer in Christ, who has received grace and truth into his heart, adopt as his rule of life that which neither testifies of Christ nor brings peace to the conscience?

The believer is to live by faith in the Son of God (Galatians 2:20). The law is not of faith. How, then, can it lay down rules for the life of faith? If I desire to walk as a believer, it must be according to the law of love, revealed in Christ and made known in my heart by the power of God.

The law had a glory, as Paul argues in 2 Corinthians 3, as the “ministration of death and condemnation,” but that glory is now done away. Instead, the “ministration of the Spirit, of life, and of righteousness” excels in glory. A rule must not only guide but also influence. The law, as a killing letter, can only minister condemnation and death. The Spirit, however, ministers righteousness and life. Those who cling to the law as a rule of life may still have the veil over their hearts, not comprehending Paul’s words: “Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (2 Corinthians 3:17).

The Gospel as the Believer’s Rule

Does rejecting the law as a rule leave the believer without guidance? Certainly not! As Paul states: “Being not without law to God, but under law to Christ” (1 Corinthians 9:21). The believer’s rule is the gospel, which we may divide into two branches:

The gospel written upon the heart by the Spirit.

The gospel revealed in the written Word.

The New Covenant promise in Jeremiah 31:33 and Hebrews 8:10 is that God will write His law upon the hearts of His people. This law is distinct from the Mosaic law, which was written on stone tablets. The internal rule of the Spirit is described in Romans 8:2 as “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.” Unlike the law of Moses, which could not impart the Spirit, this law of the Spirit leads and sanctifies the believer. Paul declares that “as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” (Romans 8:14). If we are led by the Spirit, we are not under the law (Galatians 5:18).

The believer also has an external rule in the gospel precepts as delivered by Christ and the apostles. These do not contradict but harmonize with the Spirit’s work in the heart. The gospel provides not merely detailed instructions but guiding principles infused with grace.

Thus, a believer is not left without a rule but has all he needs to walk in holiness: the Spirit’s leading, the law of love written on his heart, and the precepts of the gospel. The law could do none of these things.

The gospel does not set aside the two great commandments—to love God and neighbor—but rather fulfills them. “Love is the fulfilling of the law” (Romans 13:10). The believer serves in the newness of the Spirit, not in the oldness of the letter (Romans 7:6). This is not a legal task but a willing obedience as Christ’s freeman (John 8:32). As Paul declares: “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man” (Romans 7:22). The new man in Christ, under the Spirit’s influence, delights in the holiness of God’s law, not as a means of bondage but as an expression of love to God and His people.

12 PHILIP MAURO OUR RELATIONSHIP TO MOSAIC LAW

(1920 America)

The Gentile Believer and The Law

The experience of the “wretched man” described in Romans 7 is not the usual experience of a converted Gentile. However, it is a sad reality that many Gentile believers do fall into this struggle. This often happens due to ignorance of the profound gospel truths revealed in Romans, or under the influence of Judaizing teachers and theological systems that emphasize legalism.

As a result, they fall from their standing in grace and seek justification or the gift of the Spirit through adherence to the Law. Hence, the solemn warning in Galatians 5:4:

“You are deprived of all effect from Christ, whosoever in law are being justified; you are fallen from grace.”

Just as there were those in Paul’s time who desired “to be of the law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm” (1 Timothy 1:7), so too today many fall into the same error.

Additionally, the struggle of the “wretched man” in Romans 7 is also experienced by many unconverted Gentiles who, unaware of the remission of sins through faith in the blood of Christ, persistently attempt (and always fail) to incline their hearts toward keeping the Mosaic Law. For those who sincerely strive to keep the Law, yet remain under its condemnation, their condition is indeed one of extreme wretchedness.

Thus, it was necessary for God to provide further revelation beyond Romans 7—specifically, in the Epistle to the Galatians. This was incorporated into Scripture to instruct and warn Gentile believers against subjecting themselves to the yoke of the Law.

When we refer to Galatians, our purpose is to illuminate the conflict described in Romans 7. What we find in Galatians strongly supports the view that the experience of Romans 7 describes a conscientious yet unconverted Israelite, rather than a truly Christian experience. In fact, Paul’s main purpose in writing to the Galatians was to warn them against the teachings that would lead them into such a struggle.

Paul’s Confrontation with Peter (Galatians 2)

In Galatians 2, Paul recounts how he confronted Peter for compelling Gentiles to live as Jews (v. 14). This dispute was deemed so important by the Holy Spirit that it was recorded in Scripture, emphasizing the seriousness of the matter. Paul sharply distinguished between Jews and Gentiles, saying:

“We, Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we [Jews] have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the Law” (Galatians 2:15-16).

Paul then declares:

“If I build again the things I threw down, I constitute myself a transgressor” (v. 18).

In other words, if Paul were to reinstate the Law as binding upon himself, he would only prove himself a lawbreaker. He continues:

“For through the Law I died to the Law, that I might live to God” (v. 19).

Here, Paul presents himself as a typical Jew and summarizes in a few words the doctrine expounded in Romans 7:

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me” (v. 20).

This is the experience every believer is called to attain. It involves death to sin, new life in Christ, and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. This verse encapsulates the truths of Romans 6 and 7, demonstrating that the believer’s life is not lived under the Law of Sinai.

Paul then declares:

“I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died for nothing” (v. 21).

The Gentile Believer’s Freedom from the Law (Galatians 3)

Having addressed the believing Jew’s deliverance from the Law through Christ’s death, Paul now turns to the Galatians. As Gentiles, they were never under the Law. Unlike the Jews, who began their service to God “in the flesh,” Gentile believers began “in the Spirit.”

For a Jew, continuing in the flesh under the Law after conversion was a grave error, yet some excuse might be made for it, given their background. But for Gentiles—who never had the Law in the first place—to now subject themselves to it was utterly senseless. Hence Paul’s rebuke:

“O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you?” (Galatians 3:1).

Paul explains that Abraham was justified by faith (v. 6), and that God, foreseeing that the Gentiles would be justified by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham, saying:

“In you shall all nations be blessed” (v. 8).

Paul warns that:

All who rely on the works of the Law are under its curse (v. 10).

The curse applies to anyone who does not continue in all things written in the Law (v. 11).

How, then, were the Jews—who were placed under the Law yet failed to keep it—delivered from its curse? Paul answers:

“Christ redeemed us [Jews] from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us” (v. 13).

This statement applies solely to Israel, for the Law’s curse was never upon the Gentiles. Paul reinforces the contrast:

“Christ was made a curse for the Jews so that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus” (v. 14).

The Law was given 430 years after the promise to Abraham and could not annul the promise (v. 17). It was temporary, serving to expose sin (v. 19), and it ended with Christ:

“Before faith came, we [Jews] were kept under the Law, shut up to the faith which should afterwards be revealed” (v. 23)

“Wherefore the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster” (vv. 24-25).

Again, the contrast is clear. The Jews were under the Law as a temporary tutor, while the Gentiles never were.

Paul affirms:

“For you [Gentiles] are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (v. 26).

Thus, Gentile believers were never under the Law, and their adoption as sons came solely by faith in Christ.

The Believer’s Life: Not Lawlessness, but Life in Christ

Although believers are not under the Law of Moses, this does not mean they live in lawlessness. Rather, they are governed by:

The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:2).

The law of Christ (Galatians 6:2).

Unlike the Law of Moses, which regulated men “in the flesh,” the believer is “not in the flesh, but in the Spirit” (Romans 8:9). This means freedom—not to sin, but from sin.

The believer’s guidance now comes from:

The commands of Christ (Matthew 5:21-48).

The teachings of Paul (2 Corinthians 5:15).

The leading of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16-18).

The Law was a yoke; life in Christ is freedom. The believer stands in grace, walks by the Spirit, and fulfills the law of Christ—living not by external constraints but by the indwelling life of Christ.

Bible Translation

The article by Philip Mauro (1920) appears to use a mix of translations, paraphrases, and possibly Mauro’s own renderings of the Greek text. Some key observations:

King James Version (KJV) Influence – Many of the verses, particularly those from Galatians and Romans, closely resemble the phrasing of the KJV, though with slight modifications.

1 Literal Greek-Based Renderings – In places, the wording reflects a

more literal translation of the Greek rather than the traditional KJV or other popular translations of the time. This suggests Mauro may have relied on his own study of the Greek text.

2 Alternative Word Choices – Phrases such as “the faithfulness of Christ” instead of “faith in Christ” (Galatians 2:16) suggest an influence from Greek interlinear readings or early 20th-century theological debates about the correct rendering of *pistis Christou* (faith/faithfulness of Christ).

No Direct Use of a Formal Published Translation – The specific wordings of several verses do not exactly match the KJV, ASV (American Standard Version, 1901), or ERV (English Revised Version, 1881-1895), which were the dominant English translations in Mauro’s time.

Conclusion:

Mauro likely used the King James Version (KJV) as a base text, while incorporating his own modifications based on his study of the Greek New Testament. His renderings reflect a theological emphasis in his interpretation rather than strict adherence to any one formal translation.

13 F.L. GOSDEN THE LAW AND GOSPEL

(A Gospel Standard Minister)

Preached at Gilead Chapel, Brighton, (This is just an extract fro the opening part to his sermon)

One Lord’s Day evening 3 April 1946

“Great peace have they which love thy law: nothing shall offend them.” (Psalm 119:165)

The law in the text is the gospel. The Law of Moses is a good law, holy and just; but it is not a law that sinners love. They reverence it, but it is an authority which can only curse them because they continue not in all things commanded, and shuts them up in prison; it can make nothing perfect; it leaves a sinner where it finds him; it brings him under its condemning power.

But the law of the text is the law of the gospel. The apostle James speaks of it as ‘the perfect law of liberty.’ It is perfect because it makes the comers thereunto perfect and because the Lord Jesus, Who is the sum and substance of it, is perfect-made perfect through suffering.

The Law of Moses was a perfect law of bondage- the perfection of the Mosaic Law is the perfection of the justice of God exercised in the condemnation of sinners.

The law of the gospel is the perfection of liberty.

‘Great peace have they which love thy law.’ There is a blessedness in this description of the gospel as being ‘a law’, for where there is a law there is authority; and Oh, the blessedness of the authority of the gospel as contrasted with the terribleness of the authority of the law. The gospel is greater than the law-not by its abrogation or destruction, but in its fulfilment; its authority abounds over the law, for ‘where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.’ The apostle speaks of it in this way: ‘For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free, from the law of sin and death.’ He then goes on to speak of what the law, could not do. So that we see there are three laws, three authorities, three powers, three dominions spoken of. First, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is the law of the gospel making one free, from the law of sin and death; secondly, the dominion of sin in our members. Then there is thirdly, the Law of Moses that is the Ten Commandments; and what this law could not do, ‘in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.’ That is the authority, the power of the gospel. The apostle -said, ‘I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ’: it is the power or the authority of God in a particular direction and to a blessed end; it is the power of God unto salvation in them that believe. Therein is the righteousness of God revealed, the righteousness of faith.

14 BARNABUS THE TRUE SABBATH REST

1st Century

Introduction

A realisation of this reality—the true Sabbath rest—and an understanding of its doctrine will help resolve the problems introduced by those who insist that the Sabbath, or any other day, must be kept holy, or by those who claim certain things are forbidden or obligatory. In Hebrews 4, we are exhorted: “Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.” This rest is entered into by faith in Christ alone—it is the gospel rest.

BARNABAS WAS A LEVITE

Barnabas being a Levite was very conversant with the Law of Moses, as was

the Apostle Paul.

36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Paul Barnabas and Titus

Paul took Titus and Barnabas to Jerusalem

Galatians 2:1-10

2 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.

2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

Galatians 2:11-14

Paul Contends with Peter and Barnabas at fault

11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

Barnabas had learned the lesson

Barnabas had lapsed but was recovered to the faith through Paul's instruction and admonition and so was qualified to teach the truth of the gospel as we will see in his epistle.

He maintained Apostolic teaching stating that the lord Jesus is the **true rest for the people of God**, teaching that by the believers vital union to Christ they enter into the true rest, the true Sabbath that the Law pointed too and was its shadow.

BARNABAS CHAPTER II

That God has abolished the legal sacrifices, to introduce the spiritual righteousness of the Gospel.

1 SEEING then the days are exceedingly evil, and the adversary has got the power of this present world we ought to give the more diligence to inquire into the righteous judgments of the Lord.

2 Now the assistants of our faith are fear and patience; our fellow-combatants, long suffering and continence.

3 Whilst these remain pure in what relates unto the Lord, wisdom, and understanding, and science, and knowledge, rejoice together with them.

4 For God has manifested to us by all the prophets, that he has no occasion for our sacrifices, or burnt-offerings, or oblations: saying thus; To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord.

5 I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of he-goats.

6 When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hands? Ye shall no more tread my courts.

7 Bring no more vain oblations, incense is an abomination unto me your new moons and sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies I cannot bear with, it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting; your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth.

8 These things therefore hath God abolished, that the new law of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is without the yoke of any such necessity, might have the spiritual offering of, men themselves.

9 For so the Lord saith again to those heretofore; Did I at all command your fathers when they came out of the land of Egypt concerning burnt-offerings of sacrifices?

10 But this I commanded them, saying, Let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour, and love no false oath.

11 Forasmuch then as we are not without understanding, we ought to apprehend the design of our merciful Father. For he speaks to us, being willing that we who have been in the same error about the sacrifices, should seek and find how to approach unto him.

12 And therefore he thus bespeaks us, The sacrifice of God (is a broken spirit,) a broken and contrite heart — God will not despise.

13 Wherefore brethren, we ought the more diligently to inquire after those things that belong to our salvation, that the adversary may not have any entrance into us, and deprive us of our spiritual life.

14 Wherefore he again speaketh to them, concerning these things; Ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

15 Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is

it to bow down his head like a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?

16 But to us he saith on this wise: Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free: and that ye break every yoke?

17 Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thy own flesh.

18 Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.

19 Then shalt thou call and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry and he shall say, Here I am; if thou put away from the midst of thee the yoke; the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry; and satisfy the afflicted soul.

20 In this, therefore, brethren, God has manifested his foreknowledge and love for us; because the people which he has purchased to his beloved Son were to believe in sincerity; and therefore he has shown these things to all of us, that we should not run as proselytes to the Jewish Law.

BARNABAS CHAPTER XIII: THE SABBATH A FIGURE OF THE TRUE

That the sabbath of the Jews was but a figure of a more glorious sabbath to come, and their temple, of the spiritual temples of God.

1 FURTHERMORE it is written concerning the sabbath, in the Ten Commandments, which God spake in the mount Sinai to Moses, face to face: Sanctify the sabbath of the Lord with pure hands, and with a clean heart.

2 And elsewhere he saith; If thy children shall keep my Sabbaths, then will I put my mercy upon them.

3 And even in the beginning of the creation he makes mention of the sabbath. And God made in six days the works of his hands, and he finished them on the seventh day; and he rested the seventh day, and sanctified it.

4 Consider, my children, what that signifies, he finished them in six days. The meaning of it is this: that in six thousand years the Lord God will bring all things to an end.

5 For with him one day is a thousand years; as himself testifieth, saying, Behold this day shall be as a thousand years. Therefore, children, in six days, that is, in six thousand years, shall all things be accomplished.

6 And what is that he saith, And he rested the seventh day he meaneth this:

that when his Son shall come, and abolish the season of the Wicked One, and judge the ungodly; and shall change the sun and the moon, and the stars; then he shall gloriously rest on that seventh day,

7 He adds, lastly: Thou shalt sanctify it with clean hands and a pure heart. Wherefore we are greatly deceived if we imagine that anyone can now sanctify that day which God has made holy, without having a heart pure in all things.

8 Behold, therefore, he will then truly sanctify it with blessed rest, when we (having received the righteous promise, when iniquity shall be no more, all things being renewed by the Lord) shall be able to sanctify it, being ourselves first made holy;

9 Lastly, he saith unto them Your new moons and your Sabbaths I cannot bear them. Consider what he means by it; the Sabbaths, says he, which ye now keep are not acceptable unto me, but those which I have made; when resting from all things I shall begin the eighth day, that is, the beginning of the other world.

10 For which cause we observe the eighth day¹ with gladness, in which Jesus rose from the dead; and having manifested himself to his disciples, ascended into heaven.

11 It remains yet that I speak to you concerning the temple: how those miserable men being deceived have put their trust in the house, and not in God himself who made them, as if it were the habitation of God.

12 For much after the same manner as the Gentiles, they consecrated him in the temple.

13 But learn therefore how the Lord speaketh, rendering the temple vain: Who has measured the heaven with a span, and the earth with his hand? Is it not I? Thus with the Lord, Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What is the house that ye will build me? Or what is the place of my rest? Know therefore that all their hope is vain.

14 And again he speaketh after this manner: Behold they that destroy this temple, even they shall again build it up. And so it came to pass; for through their wars it is now destroyed by their enemies; and the servants of their enemies build it up.

15 Furthermore it has been made manifest, how both the city and the temple, and the people of Israel should be given up. For the scripture saith; And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the Lord will deliver up the sheep of his pasture, and their fold, and their tower unto destruction. And it is come to pass, as the Lord hath spoken.

1 Jesus arose for the dead on the 1st day on the week, which is the 8th day, from the 1st day of the previous week, and also when circumcision was due to be performed)

16 Let us inquire therefore, whether there be any temple of God? Yes there is: and there where himself declares that he would both make and perfect it. For it is written: And it shall be that as soon as the week shall be completed, the temple of the Lord shall be gloriously built in the name of the Lord.

17 I find therefore that there is a temple. But how shall it be built in the name of the Lord? I will shew you.

18 Before that we believed in God, the habitation of our heart was corruptible, and feeble, as a temple truly built with hands.

19 For it was a house full of idolatry, a house of devils; inasmuch as there was done in it whatsoever was contrary unto God. But it shall be built in the name of the Lord.

20 Consider, how that the temple of the Lord shall be very gloriously built; and by what means that shall be, learn.

21 Having received remission of our sins, and trusting in the name of the Lord, we are become renewed, being again created as it were from the beginning. Wherefore God truly dwells in our house², that is, in us.

22 But how does he dwell in us? By the word of his faith, the calling of his promise, the wisdom of his righteous judgments and the commands of his doctrine. He himself prophesies within us, he himself dwelleth in us, and openeth to us who were in bondage of death the gate of our temple, that is, the mouth of wisdom, having given repentance unto us; and by this means has brought us to be an incorruptible temple.

23 He therefore that desires to be saved looketh not unto the man, but unto him that dwelleth in him, and speaketh by him; being struck with wonder, forasmuch as he never either heard him speaking such words out of his mouth, nor ever desired to hear them.

24 This is that spiritual temple that is built unto the Lord.

15 JUSTIN MARTYR SABBATH AND MOSAIC LAW

(150 AD)

In Dialogue with Trypho, Justin Martyr (c. 150 AD) engages in a debate with a Jewish scholar named Trypho regarding the relationship between Christianity and Judaism. Specifically, in Chapter 12 of this dialogue, Justin discusses the Sabbath and the Mosaic Law and why Christians no longer observe it in the way that Jews do.

Here is the relevant passage from Dialogue with Trypho, Chapter 12:

“The new law requires you to keep perpetual Sabbath, and you, because you are idle for one day, suppose you are pious, not discerning why this has been

2 1 Corinthians 3:16-17

16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

commanded you. If there was no need of circumcision before Abraham, or of the observance of Sabbaths, or feasts, and sacrifices, before Moses; no more need is there of them now, after that according to the will of God, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has been born without sin, of a virgin sprung from the stock of Abraham.” (Dialogue with Trypho, Chapter 12)

Justin’s Argument:

Christians Keep a “Perpetual Sabbath”

Instead of observing a literal day of rest (Saturday), Justin argues that true Sabbath-keeping is spiritual and continual, meaning that Christians should live in perpetual righteousness and holiness every day, not just one day per week.

Sabbath and Other Laws Were Temporary

Justin points out that circumcision, Sabbaths, and feasts were not required before Abraham and Moses, meaning they were part of a temporary Old Covenant.

Now that Jesus Christ has come, those laws are no longer necessary.

Jesus Fulfilled the Law

Justin argues that Christ’s coming supersedes the Old Testament laws, including Sabbath observance.

Other Relevant Passages from Dialogue with Trypho

Justin further expands on why Christians worship on Sunday instead of the Sabbath in later chapters:

Chapter 23 – The Sabbath Was Given as a Sign, Not Eternal

“The Lord our God does not take pleasure in such observances, but in those who imitate the virtues of God: justice, love to all men, and abstaining from evil.”

Justin implies that outward rituals (like Sabbath-keeping) were only temporary signs, whereas true worship is moral righteousness.

Chapter 41 – Sunday Worship Instead of Sabbath

“We too would observe the fleshly circumcision, and the Sabbaths, and in short all feasts, if we did not know for what reason they were imposed upon you—namely, because of your sins and the hardness of your hearts.”

Here, Justin explicitly states that Sunday worship is superior to Sabbath observance because the Old Testament laws were imposed due to Israel’s sin and hardness of heart.

Chapter 67 – Why Christians Worship on Sunday

“We all gather on the day of the Sun (Sunday), because it is the first day on which God made the world, and because on this same day Jesus Christ our Savior rose from the dead.”

This passage from First Apology (not Dialogue with Trypho) confirms that Sunday was already the primary day of Christian worship by the 2nd century.

Summary

Justin Martyr strongly argued that:

The Sabbath was a temporary law given to Israel due to their sins.

Christians observe a “perpetual Sabbath” by living righteously every day.

Jesus’ resurrection on Sunday made it the primary day of worship.

Sunday worship was an established Christian practice by the mid-2nd century.

FURTHER PUBLICATIONS

I also include recommended a reading list of books and have republished many classical theological works, freely available on my Internet Archive Library. <https://archive.org/details/@davidolores>

Please feel free to contact me for discussion or counsel.

LET CHRISTIAN MEN BE MEN



David Clarke

Originally published as *The Bierton Crisis* (1984), this deeply personal and theological account traces the journey of David Clarke—minister, church secretary, and committed member of the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist Church, a historic Gospel Standard cause founded in 1832.

This book documents a significant crisis that shook the foundation of the Bierton Church in 1984. As doctrinal errors and questionable practices crept into the fellowship, David stood firm in proclaiming the doctrines of grace—particularly Particular Redemption—and affirmed that the gospel of Christ, not the Law of Moses, is the believer's rule of life. His stance led to a withdrawal of fellowship, yet the church never terminated his membership, desiring his return.

David's testimony not only exposes the theological and ecclesiastical strug-

gles within the church but also chronicles the unexpected closure of the Berton chapel in 2002, while he was engaged in gospel mission work in the Philippines. Upon returning to the UK, he discovered that a new, unelected group of trustees had taken control of the chapel, denied his rightful membership, and ultimately sold the historic building as a domestic property in 2006.

This book is both a warning and a call: a warning against doctrinal compromise and a call for ministers and believers to ground their faith and practice in Scripture alone—not tradition, not personal opinion, and not the fear of man.

Let Christian Men Be Men is an appeal to return to biblical conviction, gospel clarity, and godly courage—so that men may truly stand, teach, and live as Christ’s ambassadors in an age of confusion.

CONVERTED ON LSD TRIP



By David Clarke (Author)

This book is not about drug use—it is about deliverance.

On the 16th of January 1970, during a terrifying LSD trip, I was confronted with the reality of my own sin and the judgment of God. In desperation, I

cried out to the Lord Jesus Christ—and He saved me. That night marked the end of a life of crime and the beginning of a journey of faith, repentance, and transformation that would take me far beyond anything I had imagined.

At the time, I was virtually illiterate. I had left school with no qualifications, been sent prison in Dover Borstal, and lived in rebellion against God and the law. After my conversion, I taught myself to read using the King James Bible and classical Christian literature. That education shaped my mind and my convictions, leading me eventually to become a lecturer in electronics, teaching in colleges for over 20 years.

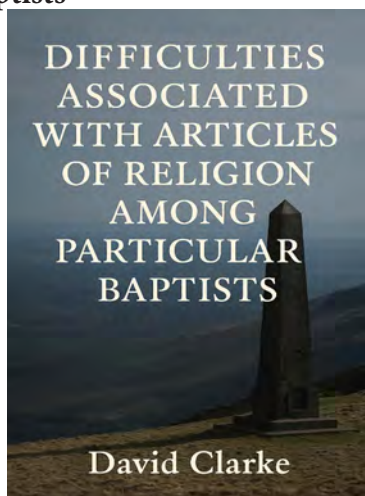
But the heart of this book is not about my teaching career. It's about the saving grace of God, the power of the gospel, and the reality that no one is beyond hope. It's a testimony for the broken, the backslider, the addicted, the imprisoned, and those who think they've gone too far. It is also a warning to any who treat eternal things lightly.

Though I fell into sin and unbelief again in the early 1990s, God restored me through repentance and drew me back as told in *The Fall Dspiration And Recorery*. Since then, I've sought to tell everyone—especially my former students and friends—that the Lrd Jesus Christ still saves. I write to you as one who has walked in darkness and has seen the light.

My prayer is that this story will challenge you to think, cause you to reflect, and point you to Christ. This is not entertainment. It is a declaration of truth. And the truth is: Jesus still saves sinners today.

DIFFICULTIES ASSOCIATED WITH ARTICLES OF RELIGION

Among Particular Baptists



David Clarke

Articles of Religion are important when dealing with matters of the Christian Religion, however problems occur when churches fail to recognize there is a growth in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ in any believer. When a person first believes in the Lord Jesus Christ they cannot possibly have a comprehensive knowledge of a churches constitution or its articles of religion, before solemnly subscribing to them. The author David Clarke has introduced the Doctrines of Grace to Bierton Particular Baptists Pakistan, situated in Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistan and bearing in mind his own experience with articles of religion he has compiled Bierton Particular Baptists Pakistan articles of religion from the first Bierton Particular Baptists of 1831, of which he is the sole surviving member, the First London Baptist Confession, 2nd edition 1646, and those of Dr John Gill, in order to avoid some of the difficulties encounter by Particular Baptist during the later part of the 19 century and since. This booklet highlights the problem and suggests the Bierton Particular Baptists Pakistan is as step in the right direction. **Isaiah 52:8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.**

BISAC: Religion / Christianity / Baptist

Contents

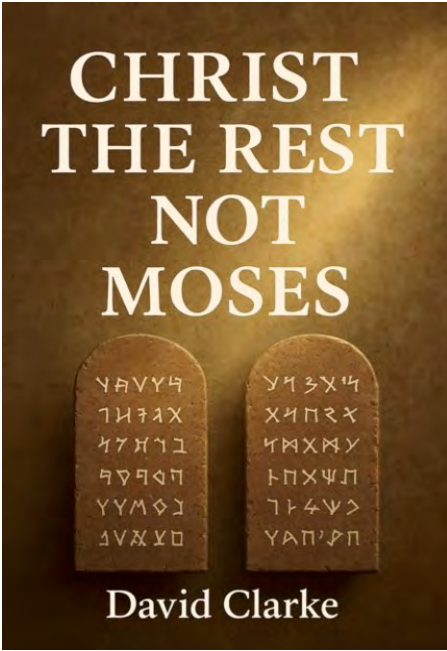
Introduction

Articles of Religion Important

Authors Testimony

Bierton Particular Baptist Church
 A Difficulty Over Articles Of Religion
 Written From Experience
 Bierton Particular Baptists History
 1 First London Particular Baptists Confession 1646, 2nd Edition
 The Development of Articles Of Religion, Act of Toleration 14
 Additions That Are Wrong
 2 London Baptist Confession 1689 1
 Notes on The London Baptists Confession 1689
 3 Bierton Particular Baptists Articles of Religion, 1831
 Difficulties Over Articles of Religion
 Notes on Bierton Particular Baptists 1831
 4 The Gospel Standard Articles of Religion 1878
 Observations of the Gospel Standard Articles of religion
 Letter to Mr Role's of Luton Added Articles
 My comments Article 32
 The Difficulties Of these Articles Proved
 Serious Doctrinal Errors Held
 Recommendation for Serious Minded
 5 Bierton Particular Baptists Pakistan 2016
 6 Appendix 60
 Gospel Standard 31 Articles

CHRIST THE REST, NOT MOSES



By David Clarke
Author of Converted on LSD Trip

“Let us labour therefore... to enter into that rest.” – Hebrews 4:11

What is the true rest promised to the people of God? Is it found in observing days and laws — or in Christ Himself?

In this bold and thought-provoking work, David Clarke draws from Scripture and personal experience to confront a foundational issue at the heart of Christian doctrine: justification by faith alone.

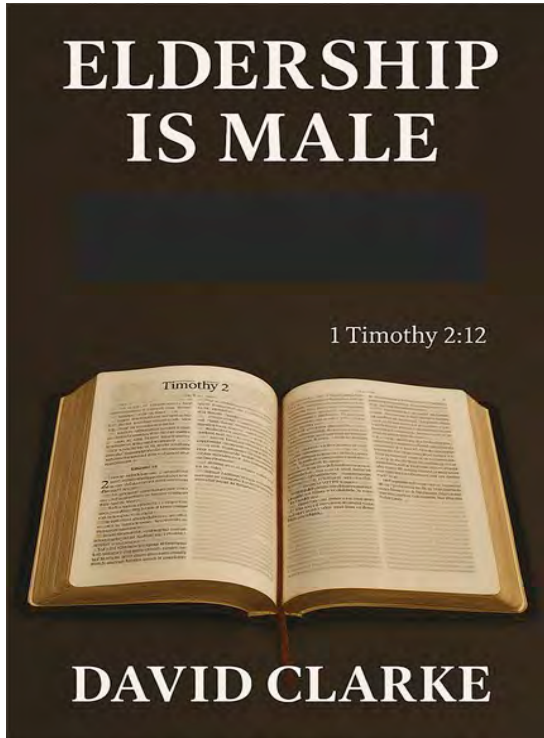
Clarke, once rejected by a Gospel Standard minister over his understanding of Hebrews 4, writes not to stir controversy, but to call believers back to the simplicity and power of the gospel. With a serious tone, pastoral heart, and unwavering conviction, he urges readers to turn from legalism and shadows to the finished work of Christ.

Written especially for those who love the doctrines of grace, yet feel isolated or misunderstood, this book is a call to clarity, courage, and confidence in

the rest that is found in Christ — and Christ alone.

This is not merely a theological issue. It is a matter of liberty, peace, and the very ground of our standing before God.

ELDERSHIP IS MALE



OR Only a Woman Can Be Pregnant

Does the Lord Jesus Christ Want Women to Rule as Elders in His Church?

By David Clarke

In a world increasingly shaped by cultural shifts and ideological pressure, the Church is not immune to confusion regarding gender roles and spiritual authority. In *Eldership Is Male*, David Clarke takes a bold, scriptural stand on one of the most controversial issues confronting the Church today: should women serve as elders?

Originally sparked by a real-life confrontation within his local church, Clarke documents his personal journey, correspondence, and theological

reflections surrounding the attempt to appoint women as elders—an act he believes directly contradicts biblical teaching. Drawing from Scripture, historical context, and his own experiences, the author lays out a clear, uncompromising case for male eldership as designed by God and established by Christ through His apostles.

The alternative subtitle, *Only a Woman Can Be Pregnant*, serves as a provocative reminder of biological and biblical distinctions—truths increasingly denied or dismissed in both society and the Church.

This book is a clarion call for Christians to return to the authority of God's Word, resist the tide of modern compromise, and faithfully uphold the doctrines delivered once to the saints.